18 JANUARY 2014

NME

100 ALBUMS FOR 2014

Everything you need to know about the year's most essential records

Track names ***Release dates*** ***New directions***

IN THE STUDIO INTERVIEWS with...

The Horrors

Lily Allen

Everything Everything

The Maccabees

Merchandise **Interpol** **St Vincent** **Metronomy**

Exclusive info on... **Damon Albarn** **Grimes** **Alt-J** **Palma Violets**

"I'm sick to death of people saying we've made 11 albums that sound exactly the same. In fact we've made 12 albums that sound exactly the same." ANGUS YOUNG

Kasabian

Inside their 'future rock'n'roll' laboratory

"The new album is beyond hard... ...we're scared for every other band"

"We're bringing sexy back"

Who said this about their next record?

A The Cribs B Klaxons C Wild Beasts D Manics

secrets and revelations inside

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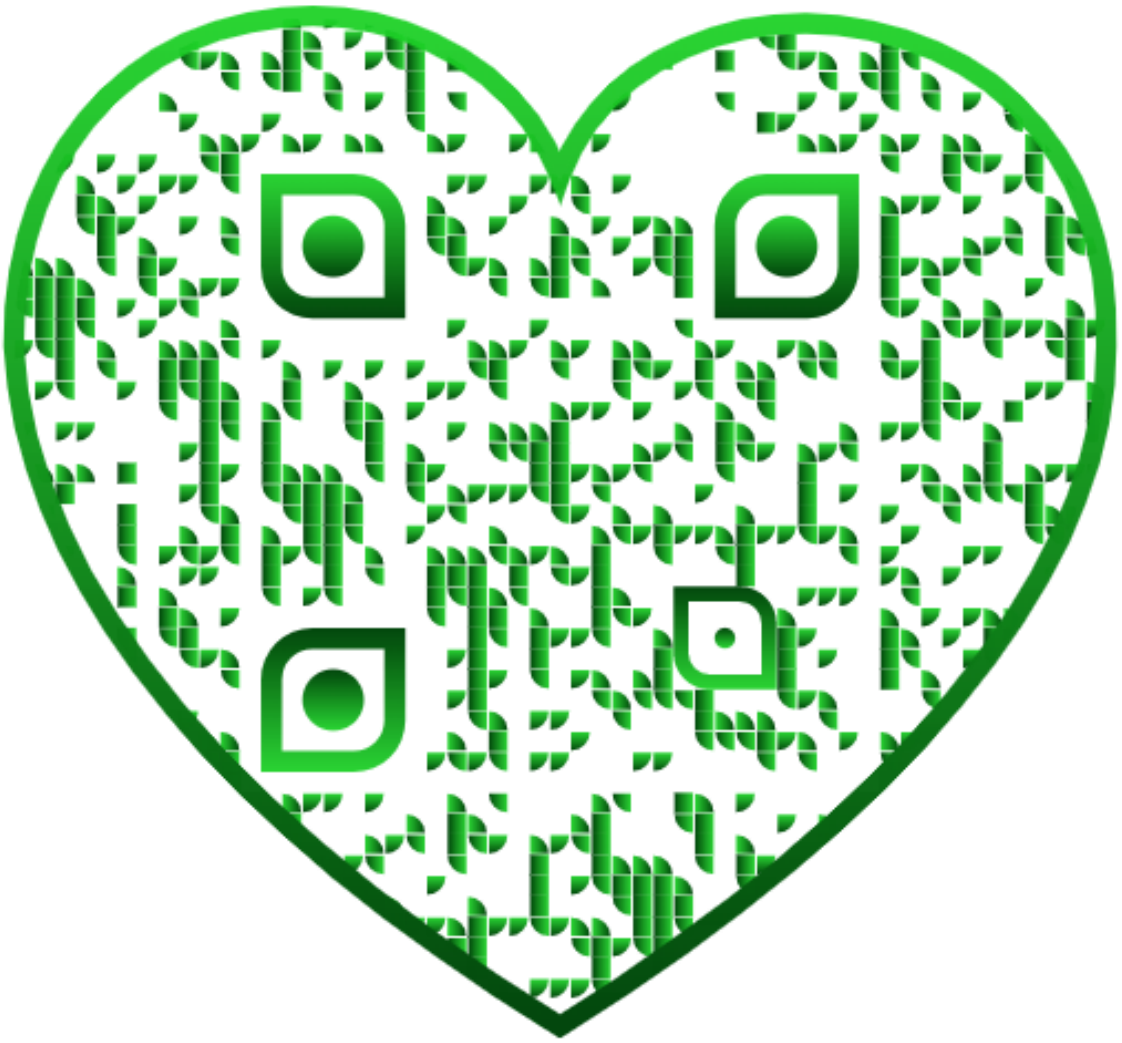

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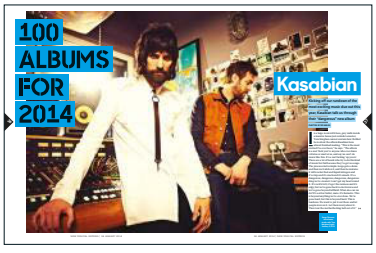
INSIDE NME

NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS | 18 JANUARY 2014

4 SOUNDING OFF
8 THE WEEK
12 ANATOMY OF AN ALBUM
The Kinks – 'The Kinks Are The Village Green Preservation Society'
15 SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE
Miles Kane
20 REVIEWS
32 NME GUIDE
64 THINK TANK
65 THIS WEEK IN...
66 BRAINCELLS

▼FEATURES



100 ALBUMS FOR 2014 STARRING:

Kasabian
Tom Howard visits Serge and Tom at home in Leicester, where they talk up their reinvention of rock'n'roll and how they'll ward off all the competition

Lily Allen
Returning after a four-year break from music, the London pop star is ready to cause more controversy than ever, finds Barry Nicolson

The Maccabees
Ben Hewitt discovers the pressure is on for the indie quintet as they prepare to overcome new challenges

Also featured:
Metronomy, Wild Beasts, The Horrors, Merchandise, Damon Albarn, Everything Everything, Manic Street Preachers, Django Django, Palma Violets, Peace, Lykke Li, Kelis
and 85 more

THIS WEEK WE ASK...

WHAT LINKS SKY LARKIN, HOOKWORMS, MANSUN AND PULLED APART BY HORSES?
Menace Beach! Discover the supergroup who put McBusted to shame 17

WHO'S ON THE SHORTLIST FOR THE NME AWARDS WITH AUSTIN, TEXAS?

The nominations are revealed and voting officially begins 10

WHICH SONG MAKES MILES KANE FEEL IMMORTAL?

The one he wants played when he dies, of course 15

20 ESSENTIAL TRACKS
8 PAGES OF REVIEWS
25 NEW BANDS TO DISCOVER

THE NME BAND LIST

Against Me	21	Half Loon	18
Allez Bartoli	17	Happy Diving	18
All We Are	18	Hero Fisher	17
Axxa/Abraxas	19	Hidden Cameras	22
Beck	6, 63	High Hopes	17
Benjamin Curtis	11	The Horrors	42
Big Ups	21	Interpol	46
Black Marble	19	Kaiser Chiefs	66
Boats	23	Kwabs	7
Bombay Bicycle Club	6, 63	Marram	23
Broken Bells	52	The Men	7, 48
The Breeders	26	Merchandise	7, 52
Butter The Children	18	MØ	7, 63
Charlie Boyer & The Voyeurs	27	Mode Modeme	21
Cheetahs	6	Mogwai	22
China	19	Mowbird	18
Chlöe Howl	59	Mutual Benefit	22
Chromeo	6	Nick Cave	8
Communions	17	Neighbour	18
Connan Mockasin	19	Nuns	19
The Cribs	60	Palma Violets	51
Damien Jurado	23	Patrick Wolf	27
Dave.i.d	7	Phil Everly	11
Decent Lovers	19	Public Access TV	17
Diiv	63	Rick Ross	6
The Districts	18	The Rifles	21
Django Django	62	Run The Jewels	7
Drake	6	Salvia Plath	19
Dum Dum Girls	53	SBTRKT	6
East India Youth	17	Speedy Ortiz	26
Elbow	6, 63	The Spits	19
EMA	48	Spring King	18
Empress Of	17	St Vincent	7, 62
Evian Christ	18	Thee Silver Mt Zion Memorial Orchestra	22
Eyeshadow	19	Tom Furse	6
The Flaming Lips	7	Totoake	17
Francis Ling	6	Toy	27
Girl Band	7	Vaadat Charigim	22
Goners	17	Vampire Weekend	7
Grimes	59	Warpaint	20
Grimm Grimm	18	Wolf Alice	24
Half Loon	18	X priest X	17

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SHAMELESS PLUG!!! ***SHAMELESS PLUG!!!

CONTRIBUTORS

Eve Barlow
Deputy Editor
Eve reviews the new Warpaint album: "I was listening to it on a night bus and was so hypnotised by the drumming I almost ended up on the other side of town."

Dan Kendall
Photographer
The Maccabees were shot in the studio by Dan: "I was standing on a rickety chair for one of the shots. They seemed very concerned that I might fall, which was sweet of them."

Amy Rose Spiegel
Writer
Amy enjoyed a double bill of The Breeders and Speedy Ortiz live in New York: "Can the Deal sisters adopt me into their family or band, please?"

COVER PHOTO: ED MILES

SOUNDING OFF

TELL US WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND

Answering you this week: Ben Hewitt

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

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CHECK YOUR RADAR

Thanks for shaking off my January blues with your new bands issue: in one day I went from snivelling into my cornflakes under a duvet to raving with excitement about music in 2014. I discovered several bands I'll be watching all year, and also got confirmation that Chance The Rapper is the most exciting thing to happen to hip-hop in ages. (Let's just ignore the fact he hangs out with James Blake, eh?) Not every pick was to my liking, but there were so many other great bands to choose from. For so long, I've been fed up of hearing people say that music's in a bad place or there's nothing new or exciting any more – and now I have proper proof to shove in their faces.
Andrew Kerr, Edinburgh

Ben Hewitt: I have a dream, Andrew. A dream that, one glorious day, the passing of each calendar year will not be marked by know-nothing berks boring on about how much better music was 'in their day'; a utopian vision of a harmonious future world that isn't tarnished by snooty sorts insisting there are no new bands worth getting worked up about. Because, as last week's special *Radar* issue showed, there's tons of new music that we should all be getting excited about – and, as ever, it's our job at *NME* to find the best, brightest and most diverse young talent around, and tell you lot all about them. So thanks very much for the kind words, comrade: may you inflict a thousand paper cuts upon the naysayers by thrusting your copy of the magazine under their noses.

PJ FOR PM

Never mind the Scottish independence referendum, and forget the debate about the European Union, because it's now clear there's only one real pressing political question in 2014: how soon can we install PJ Harvey as prime minister? Her takeover of the *Today* programme on Radio 4 showed her to be infinitely more qualified than Spameron, with a mix of political anger from the likes of John Pilger, great music from the likes of Tom Waits and only a flipping interview from Julian Assange in the Ecuadorian embassy. That's enough to secure my vote (as long as we still get another album soon, please).
Amy Hunter, via email

BH: Now this is thinking I can get behind, Amy. In fact, let's take it as a given that Polly would storm into Number 10 with the biggest landslide in human history, and crack on with the tough job of assembling her first Cabinet. The economy is so bloody depressing nowadays – all that dreary talk about cuts and taxes and the like – so let's bring back the fun by making Noel Gallagher, a man who spent oodles of cash on cars despite not being able to drive, the chancellor of the exchequer. His brother Liam can be foreign secretary, because it's only fair to give him a final crack at establishing good relations with the US.

GOING GAGA

What on earth is going on with Lady Gaga? Can you lot despatch someone to give her a cup of tea and a biscuit and a hug? I mean, it's not like she's ever made much pretence of being well balanced, but what with all the references to drugs on 'Artpop', that deeply weird *Newsnight* appearance and her recent rants about how those who "betrayed" her, I'm starting to get a little worried. Perhaps Mother Monster needs some mothering herself.
Alex Dowson, Norwich

BH: Oh, but it's just delicious, isn't it, Alex? I didn't even eat yesterday because I was still supping on Lady Gaga's bitterness. Schadenfreude aside, I actually like Gaga – or at least, I did before she went down a road paved with so many pseudo-intellectual stones it would make Damien Hirst yearn for watercolours instead. Only a poor pop singer with tacky videos and a bit of a dim-witted album concept (art and music – how did she come up with such a visionary idea?) blames their tools, I reckon.

WILD FOR THE BEASTS

Everyone else may as well just give up now: I've just heard 'Wanderlust', the first single from Wild Beasts' new album 'Present Tense', and I already feel confident in saying nothing else will come close in 2014. Surely it's time for them to smash through the mainstream and get the recognition they deserve?
Hayley Pridmore, via email

BH: I couldn't agree more, Hayley. For my money, there's not been a band more innovative, interesting and damn-right brilliant to come out of the UK for absolutely ages, and I've got all my digits crossed that this is the album that's going to send them to the top of the charts forever, smirking haughtily at Adele while Hayden Thorpe yells, 'WHY SO SAD, CLOWN?' at Emeli Sandé in the most pristine falsetto imaginable.

BAM THWOK-THANKS

Pixies like to keep teasing us, don't they? As a lifelong fan I was disappointed with the lacklustre 'EP-1', but I knew they would repay my faith in the end! The neat, petite 'EP-2', which thankfully doesn't just rehash old glory, is just enough to keep fans slavishly hanging on without news of a new album.
Andrew Hughes, via email

BH: There can't be many times that Gaga and Pixies have been thematically linked, but I can't have been the only one worried that Black Francis and co may have been suffering from a touch of the Artpops: the uninspiring 'EP-1' and sacking of bassists hardly boded well. Just goes to show us for the fools we are. Here's hoping they stop piddling around with the hors d'oeuvres and serve up a giant main course soon.

LOOK WHO'S STALKING

I met Liam at XFM's studios when Beady Eye were in session (above). I also met him at Rough Trade East, when I saw him go to the toilet and waited outside (unashamedly). I'm sure he washed his hands.
Mark Boulton, via email

JESS BAUMUNG

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ON REPEAT

NME TRACK OF THE WEEK

1. Bombay Bicycle Club
Luna

Judging by the tracks they've casually let slip so far, Bombay Bicycle Club's fourth album will be one of 2014's most exhilarating returns. 'Luna' is the best of the new bunch – a polyrhythmic beast constructed from heavenly harmonies and a skyscraping melody. With more than a touch of Foals' 'Holy Fire' bolshiness about it, this is the sound of the London band playing with the big boys.

Leonie Cooper, writer

2. Elbow
Fly Boy Blue

The first taste of new album 'The Take Off And Landing Of Everything' finds Guy Garvey surveying the nation with his barbed pen ready: "*Someone's dancing on the box/Former MP, and no-one's watching*," he sings, his vocals multitracked to mesmerising, robotic effect. Urgent and dark at first, with stings of wailing sax, Garvey turns the lens on his own lifestyle: "*I'm reaching that age when decisions are made, are made on the life and liver*".

Dan Stubbs, News Editor

3. Francis Lung
A Selfish Man

Former Wu Lyf bassist Tom McClung's first proper single under his Francis Lung guise is a jangly pop affair at odds with the heaviness of his previous band, and a progression from his previous demos. There's a catharsis in the lyrics – "*they say you can't come back, that's why I never left*" – and whether they refer to a broken romance or McClung's relationship with former bandmate Ellery Roberts, they help create a brilliant pop confessional.

Jenny Stevens, Deputy News Editor

4. Chromeo feat. Toro Y Moi
Come Alive

Riding valiantly into this year's disco-friendly nightclubs on the back of Daft Punk's success in 2013 come Montreal duo Chromeo. Toro Y Moi man Chaz Bundick features on this slice of super-happy space funk, which straddles the ice cool/very cheesy axis and is packed full of slap bass and lyrics urging someone on the dancefloor to "*give it up*" lest she "*lose her mind*". Not big or clever, but fun.

David Renshaw, News Reporter

5. Drake
Trophies

An offcut from 'Nothing Was The Same', 'Trophies' details how Drake is just "*tryna stay alive and take care of my people*". "*They don't have no award for that*", he adds. All the accolades should go to the track's producer, Hit-Boy, instead, for providing the mighty trumpets that toot over a half-step beat and offset Drake's whinges. His best work since Kanye and Jay Z's 'Niggas In Paris'.

Kate Hutchinson, writer

6. SBTRKT feat. Jessie Ware
Runaway

Such a tease, that SBTRKT. After months of radio silence, Aaron Jerome dropped this sliver of warm synths and broken beats at the end of his New Year's Eve set in Mexico. It features Jessie Ware in full Ashanti mode, trying to keep her love life together while Sampha croons over jittery violins in the background. At just over a minute, 'Runaway' is tantalisingly short, but hints at more good stuff in store this year.

Hazel Sheffield, writer

7. Tom Furse
I'm Going To See The Stars (Or What's Left Of Them)

One of two solo tracks posted online by The Horrors' synth player (the other is 'Extensions'), this ditches Tom Furse's band's euphoric tendencies in favour of something more minimal. Beginning with Balearic beats, a simple keyboard and a repetitious vocal sample, the track builds into something as tastefully experimental as you'd expect from one-fifth of one of Britain's most innovative bands.

Lisa Wright, writer

8. Beck
Love

Nothing says romance like a CD bought from a coffee shop, right? But let's forget, for now, that this track is taken from a Starbucks Valentine's Day compilation, and concentrate on the music instead, because Beck's cover of John Lennon's 1970 song 'Love' is a beautiful thing. It perfectly recaptures the laid-back playing of the original, that's plodding but never dull, and the lyrics, that mix invincibility with doubt, are delivered sweetly and deftly.

Andy Welch, writer

9. Cheatahs
Get Tight

Featuring ex-members of Weird Dreams and Male Bonding, Cheatahs are a London band who love a bit of trendy fuzz. Pleasingly, though, they don't let it get in the way of either their ability to riff the fuck out or singer James Wignall's way with a melody. The result is a pretty Dinosaur Jr, a poppy My Bloody Valentine or Yuck with big drumming and actual tunes, and 'Get Tight' is the sloppy and loud centerpiece of their soon-come debut album.

Tom Howard, Reviews Editor

10. Rick Ross
Bound 2 Freestyle

Rick Ross celebrates the end of his protracted courtroom battle with '90s drug baron 'Freeway' Ricky Ross by dropping a slouching freestyle over the sun-faded soul samples of Kanye West's 'Bound 2', and injecting it with grit using threats such as "*run into your home, put your infant in a blender*". Sinister, sumptuous and strangely addictive.

Al Horner, Assistant Editor, NME.COM

ESSENTIAL NEW TRACKS

▶LISTEN TO THEM ALL AT NME.COM/ONREPEAT NOW

11. Kwabs
Wrong or Right

Hotly tipped for 2014, London soul man Kwabs (full name: Kwabena Sarkodee Adjepong) kicks off a year he intends to own with the title track from his debut EP. Produced by up-and-coming James Blake-aping singer Sohn (who's also worked with Banks), he conjures a defiant electro ballad that's far more textured and uplifting than both those artists, delivered with a compassionate croon that rivals Sampha or Sam Smith.

Eve Barlow, Deputy Editor

12. The Flaming Lips
Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds

Alongside their own prodigious output of existential psychedelia, The Flaming Lips have spent the last couple of years earning a reputation as the world's trippiest covers band. Compared to their shimmering overhaul of 'The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face' with Erykah Badu this is relatively faithful to the original. Hopefully covering The Beatles' LSD anthem will inspire their own drug anthem. 'Mary Dances Madly Alone', anyone?

Kevin EG Perry, writer

13. Dave.i.d
Soul Reprise

Dave Sitek's Federal Prism label kicks off 2014 with a new EP from his London representative, who is also named Dave, although that's almost certainly just a coincidence. Lead track 'Soul Reprise' suggests that the power of goth, significant in 2013, shall not be waning in the year ahead: a thing of grandiose, gesticulating misery given thrust by brawny synth sequencing and a chorus that recalls Depeche Mode in their sex dungeon pomp.

Louis Pattison, writer

14. Girl Band
Lawman

Please don't call it a grunge revival, but if you thrill to the raw, sexy grind of Drenge and Loom, come peep at Dublin's Girl Band. No period pastiche, they fuse a hodgepodge of sounds into this seven-minute "anti-single" which starts off like Bikini Kill's 'Rebel Girl' before whirling up a punk-funk-grunge-metal racket that cocks a snook at early Liars.

Emily Mackay, writer

15. The Men
Pearly Gates

On which you will find six minutes of pure raucousness. 'Pearly Gates' won't be the entirety of all of the "big things" The Men promised they had ready for 2014 when they downed tools at the end of last year, but it's certainly a bold start: the sound of gnarly barflies drinking each other under the table, with distilled rock'n'roll, bluesy riffs aplenty and the formidable honky-tonk of keys in the far distance.

Hayley Avron, writer

16. Run The Jewels
Pew Pew Pew

Ostensibly, this is a bonus track on the European deluxe edition of El-P and Killer Mike's 'Run The Jewels' album, which they initially released as a free download last July for fun, before it was hailed as one of the best rap records of the year. Yet, rather than being "from the cutting room floor", as El-P says, 'Pew Pew Pew' is a new song that features – massive blast-from-the-past klaxon! – a monster scratch solo from Qbert.

Phil Hebblethwaite, writer

17. St Vincent
Digital Witness

The YouTube clip for this seems like something you'd leave running in a background tab – it looks like a still photo of Annie Clark. But look carefully and she's moving ever so slightly, though it seems like a trick of the eye. It's a nod to the subject of the funky 'Digital Witness', where Clark tackles the theory that the act of observing changes the outcome, and that the internet is leaving us incapable of living without documenting.

Laura Snapes, Features Editor

18. Vampire Weekend
Time To Say Goodbye (Con Te Partiro)

This is like the Hawaiian pizza of covers: it makes no sense at all, but it's still damn good. Previously made famous by Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli and Sarah Brightman in the mid-'90s, the track chugs along over a dubby beat and sweeping, angelic synths. Like Beck's 'Love', it's available on the Starbucks Valentine's Day compilation, 'Sweetheart 2014'.

Lucy Jones, Deputy Editor, NME.COM

19. MØ
Don't Wanna Dance

One-time punk band member, anti-government protester and Major Lazer collaborator, Danish singer MØ has done some varied stuff. This, though, is the Eliza Doolittle via Mark Ronson pop smash she'll be hoping stomps all over radio. It's cheery and has a touch of sparkle, but it's nowhere near as interesting as her character, or everything else she's recorded, sounds. On this form she's either the Scandi-Jessie Ware or another Delilah.

Greg Cochrane, Editor, NME.COM

20. Merchandise
Begging For Your Life/ In The City Light

Coming in at almost a quarter of an hour long, Merchandise's epic, two-parted debut track for new label 4AD features freeform saxophone peals, churchy piano tinkles and what sounds like a man humping a spaceship. About a third of the way in, Carson Cox's buttery baritone flirts with the idea of taking centre-stage, but surrenders to the sci-fi jazz swirls. Infuriating yet enthralling experimentalism.

Leonie Cooper, writer

ROSS GILMORE, RICHARD JOHNSON, DAN MARTENSEN, ANDY WILLSHER

TheWeek

▶ EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS IN MUSIC ■ EDITED BY DAN STUBBS

Nick Cave movie opens at Sundance

The Bad Seeds frontman's feature is just one of the musical highlights at this year's Sundance Film Festival

The Sundance Film Festival kicks off this week and it's a bumper year for music fans. The annual cinematic showcase, which takes place on January 16–26 in Park City, Utah, will host the world premiere of Nick Cave's feature film *20,000 Days On Earth*. Merging documentary and fiction, it shows 24 hours in the life of Nick Cave as he celebrates his 20,000th day on the planet.

Cave's long-term collaborators Iain Forsyth and Jane Pollard direct, describing the film as "kind of constructed real situations in which Nick can improvise". It shows the Bad Seeds frontman writing, talking to his therapist, hanging out with bandmate Warren Ellis and watching *Scarface* with his sons. It also shows him driving from one destination to the next with various passengers on board – including a cameo from Kylie Minogue, who featured on the band's 1996 album 'Murder Ballads'.

Also making its debut this week will be *God Help The Girl*, Belle And Sebastian frontman Stuart Murdoch's big screen adaptation of his 2009 concept album of the same name. Set in Glasgow's West End, it is, in Murdoch's words, a poignant indie musical about "some messed-up boys and girls and the music they made".

In addition, Beastie Boys' Adam 'Ad Rock' Horovitz has written the soundtrack for basketball film *No-No: A Dockumentary*, the story of Pittsburgh pitcher Dock Ellis, who apparently played a perfect game in 1970 while tripping on acid, while Death Cab For Cutie's Ben Gibbard has soundtracked black comedy *Laggies*, starring Keira Knightley and Chloë Moretz. ■ JENNY STEVENS

AMELIA TROUBRIDGE

Nick Cave chauffeurs Kylie in *20,000 Days On Earth*

NME AWARDS 2014 WITH AUSTIN, TEXAS: THE SHORTLIST

Arctic Monkeys: up for eight Awards

To pick the winners at the rock'n'roll ceremony of the year, go to NME.COM

You voted in your hundreds of thousands in the first round for the NME Awards 2014 with Austin, Texas. We've collated your choices (even the six that came by post!) and the shortlist is now ready. Voting goes live today (January 15) on NME.COM and remains open until February 21. The Awards ceremony is at London's O2 Academy Brixton on February 26.

BEST BRITISH BAND
Arctic Monkeys
Biffy Clyro
Disclosure
Foals
Palma Violets
Two Door Cinema Club

BEST INTERNATIONAL BAND
SUPPORTED BY austin TEXAS
Arcade Fire
Haim
Nick Cave And The Bad Seeds
Phoenix
Queens Of The Stone Age
Vampire Weekend

BEST SOLO ARTIST
David Bowie
Jake Bugg
Kanye West
Lily Allen
Lorde
Paul McCartney

BEST LIVE BAND
Arctic Monkeys
Biffy Clyro
Haim
Palma Violets
Queens Of The Stone Age
Savages

BEST NEW BAND
SUPPORTED BY Mossimo
Chvrches
Courtney Barnett
Drenge
Jagwar Ma
Swim Deep
Wolf Alice

BEST TRACK
SUPPORTED BY Blackstar AMPLIFICATION
Arcade Fire – 'Reflektor'
Arctic Monkeys – 'Do I Wanna Know?'
Daft Punk – 'Get Lucky'
Disclosure – 'White Noise'
Lily Allen – 'Hard Out Here'
Primal Scream – '2013'

BEST ALBUM
Arctic Monkeys – 'AM'
Drenge – 'Drenge'
Kanye West – 'Yeezus'
Peace – 'In Love'
Queens Of The Stone Age – '...Like Clockwork'
Savages – 'Silence Yourself'

BEST MUSIC VIDEO
Arcade Fire – 'Reflektor'
Arctic Monkeys – 'Why'd You Only Call Me When You're High?'
Eagulls – 'Nerve Endings'
Haim – 'Falling'
Lily Allen – 'Hard Out Here'
Pharrell – 'Happy'

BEST FESTIVAL
Bestival
Glastonbury
Latitude
Reading & Leeds
T In The Park
V Festival

BEST SMALL FESTIVAL
Festival Number 6
Green Man
Kendal Calling
Rockness
Swn
Y Not

BEST TV SHOW
Breaking Bad
Doctor Who
Fresh Meat
Game Of Thrones
Misfits
Sherlock

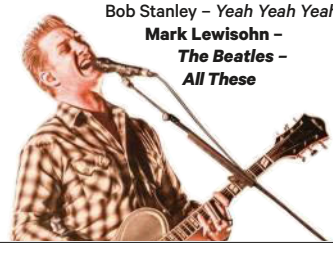
BEST MUSIC FILM
Good Vibrations
Made Of Stone
Muscle Shoals
Muse: Live At Rome Olympic Stadium
Sound City
The National: Mistaken For Strangers

BEST REISSUE
The Beta Band – 'The Regal Years: 1997–2004'
The Breeders – 'LSXX (Last Splash 20th Anniversary Edition)'
Bob Dylan – 'Bootleg Series, Vol 10: Another Self Portrait (1969–1971)'
The Clash – 'Sound System'
Nirvana – 'In Utero: 20th Anniversary Edition'
The Velvet Underground – 'White Light/White Heat 45th Anniversary Super Deluxe Edition'

BEST BAND BLOG OR TWITTER
Albert Hammond Jr
Alana Haim (Haim)
Grimes
James Blunt
Jehnny Beth (Savages)
Theo Hutchcraft (Hurts)

BEST FAN COMMUNITY
Arctic Monkeys
Haim
Hurts
Morrissey
Muse
Peace

BEST BOOK
Alan McGee – *Creation Stories...*
Beck – *Song Reader*
Bob Stanley – *Yeah Yeah Yeah*
Mark Lewisohn – *The Beatles – All These Years – Volume One: Tune In*
Morrissey – *Autobiography*
Richard Hell – *I Dreamed I Was A Very Clean Tramp: An Autobiography*



MUSIC MOMENT OF THE YEAR
Arctic Monkeys headline Glastonbury
Kanye brings Jesus onstage
Morrissey's book is published
Noel and Damon play together for Teenage Cancer Trust
Pussy Riot are freed
The Rolling Stones headline Glastonbury

WORST BAND
30 Seconds To Mars
The 1975
Imagine Dragons
Muse
One Direction
The Wanted

HERO OF THE YEAR
Alex Turner (Arctic Monkeys)
David Bowie
Este Haim (Haim)
Lou Reed
Pussy Riot
Russell Brand

VILLAIN OF THE YEAR
David Cameron
Harry Styles
Miley Cyrus
Robin Thicke
Russell Brand
Vladimir Putin

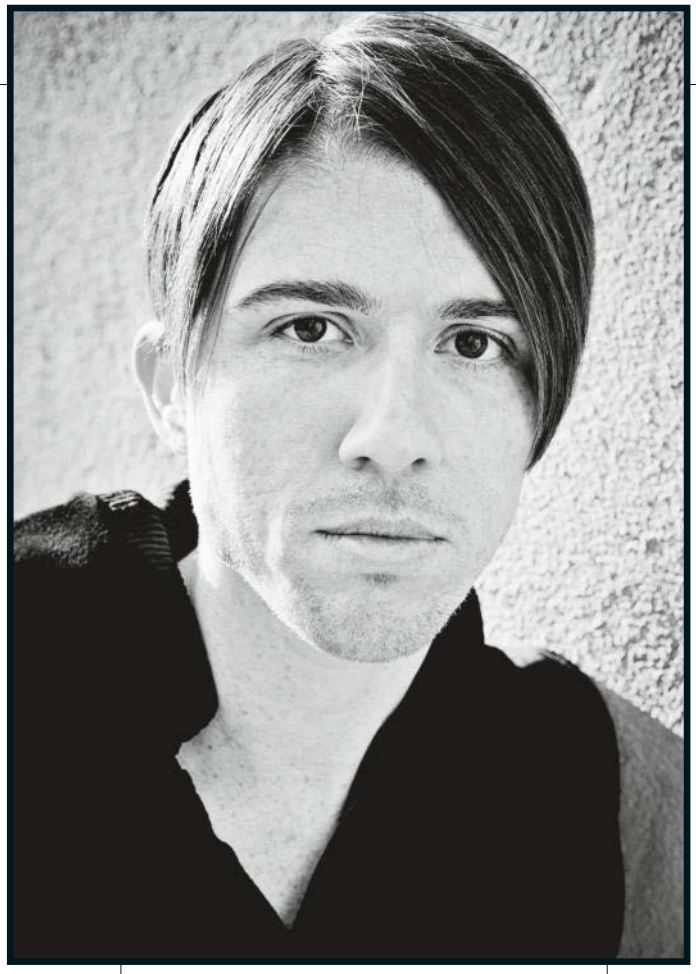
ED MILES, DANIE HARRIS

BLITZ KIDS
THE GOOD YOUTH

Red Bull RECORDS

OBITUARIES

The music world lost two major talents recently: Phil Everly of The Everly Brothers, who died of lung disease at 74, and Benjamin Curtis of Secret Machines and School Of Seven Bells, who died of cancer aged 35. Fans and friends pay tribute here



INTERPOL'S **PAUL BANKS** REMEMBERS **BENJAMIN CURTIS**

1978–2013

We lost a beautiful artist when Benjamin Curtis passed. I met him 14 years ago when I saw him perform with Secret Machines. I bought their EP 'September 000' that night and played it until the disc broke. In the early '00s, Interpol toured with Secret Machines. We'd often throw a football around and sometimes listen to classic rock together. Benjamin was gentle and soft-spoken and yet he always seemed to be alight. There was a fire inside him that came through as a powerful charisma both on and offstage. He was special. I used to refer to him as 'Mr Mojo', to portray what I felt was his indelible magnetism.

When I describe Benjamin to people who didn't know him well, I make a point of describing the calibre of his work throughout his prolific career. With Secret Machines – one of the all-time great live bands – he was a guitarist. But he began his professional career as a drummer for Tripping Daisy when he was just a teenager. That fact still wows me. As a guitarist he was a phenomenon and had a total mastery of his instrument, but he progressed from technical showiness into playing wonderful wash effects and soundscapes. Swirls of worlds came through his guitar. It was inspiring. I never had any clue how he made those sounds. After Tripping Daisy and Secret Machines came his last project: School of Seven Bells. Pure poetry and grace.

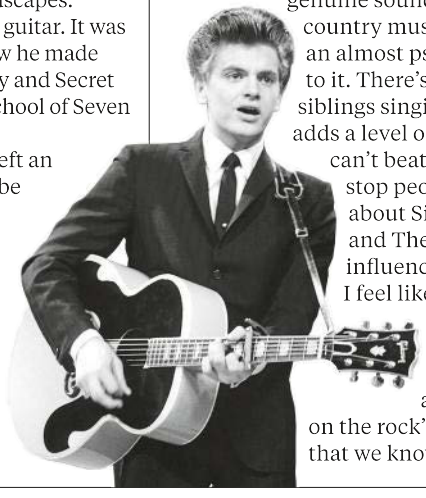
Benjamin is gone now, but he left an incredible legacy. He will always be an inspiration to me and anyone else who was blessed to spend time with him, see him perform, or hear his music. In all of his endeavours he brought a signature presence – style, poise and fury. I have a lump in my throat and a tear in my eye as I write this. So long, Benjamin... and thank you.

SINGER-SONGWRITER **CHRISTOPHER OWENS** REMEMBERS **PHIL EVERLY**

1939–2014

The Everly Brothers were one of the very few secular groups that I was exposed to as a kid [Christopher was born into the Children Of God cult]. The people I grew up with strongly separated themselves from what was on the radio, but The Everly Brothers' music is just so beautiful that it transcended that, even for them. It's not the kind of music where you become a fanatic or put their posters on your wall, but over time it makes a lasting impression and stays with you. Their music has never gone away, for me, and it remains as beautiful as my memories of it feel.

'All I Have To Do Is Dream' and 'Let It Be Me' are my favourites. I love the rocking ones like 'Cathy's Clown' and 'Wake Up Little Susie' as well, but to me what I really loved was the softer, more genuine sound that came out of country music. '...Dream' has an almost psychedelic quality to it. There's something about siblings singing together that adds a level of synchronicity you can't beat, but that didn't stop people trying. You hear about Simon And Garfunkel and The Beatles being influenced by them, but I feel like they've influenced almost everybody. The Everly Brothers were as potent as any other influence on the rock'n'roll and pop music that we know now.



PIETER M VAN HATTEM, GETTY, GUY EPPEL

NEW ALBUM
JANUARY 20TH 2014

INCLUDES THE SINGLES
'SOMETIMES' AND 'RUN FOR COVER'

hmv

www.blitzkidsofficial.com
www.redbullrecords.com

Deluxe book pack includes DVD, album and exclusive tracks

ANATOMY OF AN ALBUM

"I REVERTED TO MY ENGLISHNESS"
Ray Davies

THIS WEEK...

The Kinks: The Kinks Are The Village Green Preservation Society

Celebrating their 50th anniversary in 2014, Ray Davies says a Kinks reunion is "as close as it's ever been". In the meantime, we revisit their classic 1968 concept album

THE BACKGROUND

The record wasn't given any help by The Kinks' label, Pye. "They seemed to think of us as mainly being a singles band," drummer Mick Avory told *NME* in 1973. You could never call 'Village Green...' a singles album, and Pye responded to that quandary by not releasing any singles in the UK. 'Village Green...' received little fanfare and failed to chart. But Pye had one thing right: this was an album that couldn't be taken piecemeal. Each vignette slotted into a nostalgic whole as singer/songwriter Ray Davies dedicated his astute songwriting smarts to a glorious and relentlessly catchy celebration of a fading England.

◀ STORY BEHIND THE SLEEVE

The cover shoot for 'Village Green...' took place at Kenwood House on Hampstead Heath. *Melody Maker* photographer Barrie Wentzell took the pictures and, as far as Ray Davies was concerned, Wentzell was "documenting the end of the band". 'Village Green...' would be the last album to feature the original Kinks line-up, with bassist Pete Quaife leaving in 1969.

FIVE FACTS

1 The Kinks were banned from touring the USA in 1965 following a dispute with the American Federation of Musicians. "I wouldn't have done 'Village Green...' if we'd been on tour in America," Ray Davies said in 2008.

2 The album isn't quite as pastoral as it seems. "You have to remember that north London was my village green, my version of the countryside," Davies told *The Independent* in 2009. "I grew up in Fortis Green, and then there was Waterlow Park and the little lake."

3 At the Royal Festival Hall in London in 2011, Ray Davies performed 'Village Green...' in its entirety, backed by the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

4 After submitting a 12-track version of the album, Davies decided he wanted to make it a double instead. Pye, did not agree, but settled on a 15-track, single-disc LP.

5 As Dave Davies pointed out in the sleevenotes for the 2004 reissue, Ray Davies' quasi-spoken vocal on 'Big Sky' was an impression of Hollywood actor Burt Lancaster.

LYRIC ANALYSIS

"People take pictures of each other/Just to prove that they really existed" – 'People Take Pictures Of Each Other'

These are forgotten times, Davies is saying, because they're fleeting, captured only by a staged moment.

"I saw fame/And fame/And so I left the village green" – 'Village Green'

The trappings of stardom have made Davies forget his roots – but he "*will return there*".

"Johnny Thunder rides the highway/Moves like lightning" – 'Johnny Thunder'

Davies might paint the village green as a bucolic paradise, but it's not for everyone. Johnny Thunder is a free spirit desperate to escape that sweet stasis.

WHAT WE SAID THEN

"This album is worth buying for one very good reason alone – the title track, which is a Kinks gem." Keith Altham, NME, September 21, 1968

WHAT WE SAY NOW

In 1968, 'Village Green...' felt out of step with the times, a world away from US psychedelia and the early stirrings of heavy rock, but with hindsight it had plenty in common with The Small Faces' 'Ogdens' Nut Gone Flake' and the emerging Pink Floyd. It's best appreciated through the prism of Britpop: Ray Davies' pin-sharp documentation of bygone England and his music-hall arrangements were a profound influence on Blur.

FAMOUS FAN

"Ray Davies said it was important that we keep all of this traditional stuff like afternoon tea, cricket and cucumber sandwiches alive, because American culture was taking over the world but he couldn't imagine it taking over England. But then you realise that it did." Noel Gallagher, 2011

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"I wanted it to be [Dylan Thomas'] *Under Milk Wood*, something like that, but I never got the chance." **Ray Davies, 1969**

THE AFTERMATH

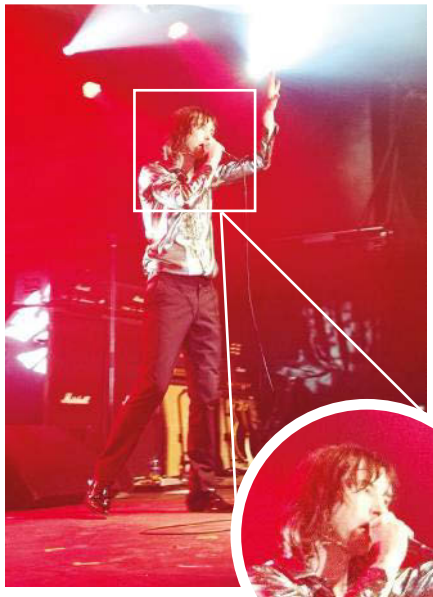
The Kinks soldiered on with Quaife's replacement John Dalton and 1970 saw a return to the charts with the singles 'Victoria', 'Lola' and 'Apeman'. The volatile relationship between the Davies brothers finally led to a Kinks split in 1996, but Ray has recently made noises about a 50th anniversary reunion.

▶THE DETAILS

▶**RECORDED** November 1966–October 1968 ▶**RELEASED** November 22, 1968 ▶**LENGTH** 38:47 ▶**PRODUCER** Ray Davies ▶**STUDIO** Pye Studios, London ▶**HIGHEST UK CHART POSITION** n/a ▶**WORLDWIDE SALES** 100k (estimated) ▶**SINGLES** Starstruck, The Village Green Preservation Society [neither released in UK] ▶**TRACKLISTING** ▶1. The Village Green Preservation Society ▶2. Do You Remember Walter? ▶3. Picture Book ▶4. Johnny Thunder ▶5. Last Of The Steam Powered Trains ▶6. Big Sky ▶7. Sitting By The Riverside ▶8. Animal Farm ▶9. Village Green ▶10. Starstruck ▶11. Phenomenal Cat ▶12. All Of My Friends Were There ▶13. Wicked Annabella ▶14. Monica ▶15. People Take Pictures Of Each Other

WORDS: MATHHEW HORTON PHOTO: GETTY

All the pictures on this page were taken on the Nokia Lumia 1020



THE FUTURE OF LIVE PHOTOGRAPHY

See exclusive behind-the-scenes films and photo galleries from Primal Scream's latest tour, all shot on the Nokia Lumia 1020

Last month *NME* headed out on tour with Primal Scream, armed with a Nokia Lumia 1020 and an AAA pass, to shoot an on-the-road documentary. Filming in the dressing room, from the side of the stage and in the crowd, we saw aspects of Bobby Gillespie and the rest of the band that you'd never normally see – but the rarest, greatest moment came onstage in Manchester in front of thousands of fans. "It was incredible," Bobby told us backstage. "It was a very young audience; the energy was astounding, it really brought out the best in us. It was pure chaos – you do it just to see that joy in people's faces. I was laughing through sheer happiness – it was hard to sing the songs because I was just loving it so much. It was so fucking beautiful."

If you weren't there in Manchester, don't fret. Harnessing the Nokia Lumia 1020's impressive abilities, *NME* captured footage of the moment when that broad grin spread over Bobby's face during 'It's Alright, It's OK', and pinned him down for a chat about it backstage. While on tour with Glasgow's finest, we made short films of the band walking onstage to packed halls, storming through their greatest hits and telling the stories behind them. We also interviewed Bobby G about how punk rock saved his life while growing up in Glasgow in the 1970s – and saved him from a beating at the hands of one of the city's most notorious teenage gang members. "He's like, 'Are you a punk? What's it like? Do you go to lots of concerts, is it brilliant and mental?' I'm like, 'Aye, it's good!'"

You can watch all these films now on NME.COM/lumia1020, where you'll also find exclusive photo galleries from Primal Scream's tour, shot by professional *NME* photographers on the Nokia Lumia 1020. It's perfect for gigs and festivals – the equivalent of an expensive SLR camera in your pocket rather than weighing heavily around your neck. "We want to give people an ecstatic experience and make them happy," Bobby told us. The Nokia Lumia 1020 lets you make beautiful films of your own, capturing that feeling for life.

▶Head to NME.COM/lumia1020 to be in with a chance of winning a Nokia Lumia 1020 plus a signed setlist from Primal Scream's tour, and browse all our upcoming activity and exclusive films shot on the Nokia Lumia 1020 with Windows Phone 8

TECH SPEC

Complete with Microsoft's Windows Phone 8 technology, the Nokia Lumia 1020 boasts a 41-megapixel sensor and Zeiss imaging technology. With its precise, powerful zoom and six physical lenses, it's optimised to deliver bright photographs and videos in low-light conditions, with special optical image stabilisation to ensure that your photos and films have that crisp professional sheen.

TheWeek

NEWS DESK

THE NUMBERS

£14m
List price for the Surrey mansion where John Lennon wrote songs for 'Sgt Pepper's...'

$25m
Amount Lady Gaga's 'ARTPOP' is reported to have lost – a figure the singer refutes

12
Age of a fan Jay Z pulled up onstage to perform 'Clique' in North Carolina

19/04/14
Date of this year's Record Store Day

BIG MOUTH

"You paid real good money to get in here, so you should be able to listen to each other"

A sarcastic **NEIL YOUNG** chastises a New York audience for clapping along

WHO THE FUCK IS...

Pacman and Peso?

They're the two US rappers who raised $10,000 via Kickstarter to film a music video in North Korea.

Is Kim Jong-un in it?
Absolutely not. The duo travelled to Pyongyang without the leader's permission and shot the video covertly under the cover of being on a sightseeing tour.

And there was no trouble?
Ironically, yes – but that happened en route in Hong Kong when Pacman crashed his hired motorbike into a car.

THE BIG QUESTION

WHICH NEW ALBUM ARE YOU MOST EXCITED TO HEAR IN 2014?

MØ
Singer-songwriter
"I can't wait to hear the Sohn album. He's such an exciting producer and all his material is so powerful and emotional. I'd love to work with him at some point."

Tom Howard
NME Reviews Editor
"Kasabian. I've heard a bit of it (see page 36), and it's the sound of a big band getting ready for some big shows with some big tunes. Loud and ridiculous."

Sam Spencer
NME reader
"It has to be Wild Beasts' (above) 'Present Tense'. 'Smother' was the soundtrack to every failed sexual encounter of the last three years, so I can't wait to see what they've got for us now."

GOOD WEEK ↔ BAD WEEK

Frank Turner

Showing off an impressive level of general knowledge, Frank Turner was triumphant in his appearance on *Celebrity Mastermind*, where Iron Maiden was his specialist subject.

Ani DiFranco

Folk singer DiFranco apologised after arranging a writers' retreat on the site of a former slave plantation in Louisiana. She wrote on Facebook: "It was a great oversight on my part."

AND FINALLY

Plan B for baby
Plan B is now a proud father after his girlfriend gave birth in 2013. The rapper reportedly spent Christmas playing his new music to his daughter (minus the not-safe-for-babies lyrics).

She bangs the drum
Ringo Starr appeared in *The Powerpuff Girls* singing, "*I wish I was a Powerpuff Girl/I'd fly through the sky/Shoot sparkly stars out of my eyes*" – proving 'Octopus's Garden' was no fluke.

The Coinage Dropout
Kanye West has taken legal action against a Bitcoin-like cryptocurrency named Coinye. The coders have said that they will give West 100,000 coins if he gives them a shout out on his next track.

▶Find these stories and more on NME.COM

Official RECORD STORE Chart

TOP 40 ALBUMS JANUARY 12, 2014

NEW 01

Stephen Malkmus & The Jicks
Wig Out At Jagbags DOMINO

It may be 25 years since Stephen Malkmus came up with Pavement's slacker-rock formula, but on 'Wig Out At Jagbags' – his sixth album with The Jicks – he finds renewed freedom and a place at the top of the chart.

▼	2	AM	**Arctic Monkeys** DOMINO
▼	3	Days Are Gone	**Haim** POLYDOR
▼	4	Pale Green Ghosts	**John Grant** BELLA UNION
▼	5	If You Wait	**London Grammar** METAL & DUST
▼	6	Join The Dots	**Toy** HEAVENLY
NEW	7	High Hopes	**Bruce Springsteen** COLUMBIA
▲	8	Halcyon	**Ellie Goulding** POLYDOR
▼	9	Bad Blood	**Bastille** VIRGIN
NEW	10	Total Strife Forever	**East India Youth** STOLEN
▲	11	Live From KCRW	**Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds** BAD SEED
▲	12	The Next Day	**David Bowie** RCA
▲	13	World Psychedelic Classics 5	**William Onyeabor** LUAKA BOP
▼	14	Beyoncé	**Beyoncé** COLUMBIA
▼	15	Push The Sky Away	**Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds** BAD SEED
▲	16	Settle	**Disclosure** PMR
▲	17	Tribute	**John Newman** ISLAND
▼	18	Silence Yourself	**Savages** MATADOR
▲	19	Immunity	**Jon Hopkins** DOMINO
▼	20	Shangri La	**Jake Bugg** EMI
NEW	21	The Lumineers	**The Lumineers** DECCA
▼	22	Big Inner	**Matthew E White** DOMINO
▼	23	Swings Both Ways	**Robbie Williams** ISLAND
▲	24	Trouble Will Find Me	**The National** 4AD
▼	25	Born To Die	**Lana Del Rey** POLYDOR
▼	26	The 1975	**The 1975** DIRTY HIT/POLYDOR
▲	27	Midnight Memories	**One Direction** SYCO
▼	28	Babel	**Mumford & Sons** GENTLEMEN OF THE ROAD/ISLAND
▼	29	Jake Bugg	**Jake Bugg** MERCURY
▼	30	II	**Moderat** MONKEYTOWN
▼	31	Long Way Down	**Tom Odell** COLUMBIA
NEW	32	Roaring 20s	**Rizzle Kicks** ISLAND
▼	33	Random Access Memories	**Daft Punk** COLUMBIA
▲	34	...Like Clockwork	**Queens Of The Stone Age** MATADOR
▼	35	Since I Saw You Last	**Gary Barlow** POLYDOR
NEW	36	Native	**OneRepublic** Interscope
NEW	37	Wakin On A Pretty Daze	**Kurt Vile** MATADOR
NEW	38	Inform Educate Entertain	**Public Service Broadcasting** TEST CARD RECORDINGS
▼	39	Our Version Of Events	**Emeli Sandé** VIRGIN
NEW	40	The Double EP – A Sea Of Split Peas	**Courtney Barnett** HOUSE ANXIETY

The Official Charts Company compiles the Official Record Store Chart from sales through 100 of the UK's best independent record shops, from Sunday to Saturday.

TOP OF THE SHOPS

THIS WEEK
DRIFT
TOTNES, DEVON
FOUNDED 1994
WHY IT'S GREAT They boast a remarkably well-curated selection of music, from indie to experimental. There's also a cosy sofa to slump on.
TOP SELLER THIS WEEK
'II' – Unknown Mortal Orchestra
THEY SAY "We listen to great music, pick the best bits and try and tell people about it as uniquely as we can."

NEWSDESK COMPILED BY: DAVID RENSHAW PHOTOS: RICHARD JOHNSON, ELINOR JONES, ANDY WILLSHER, WIREIMAGE, GETTY

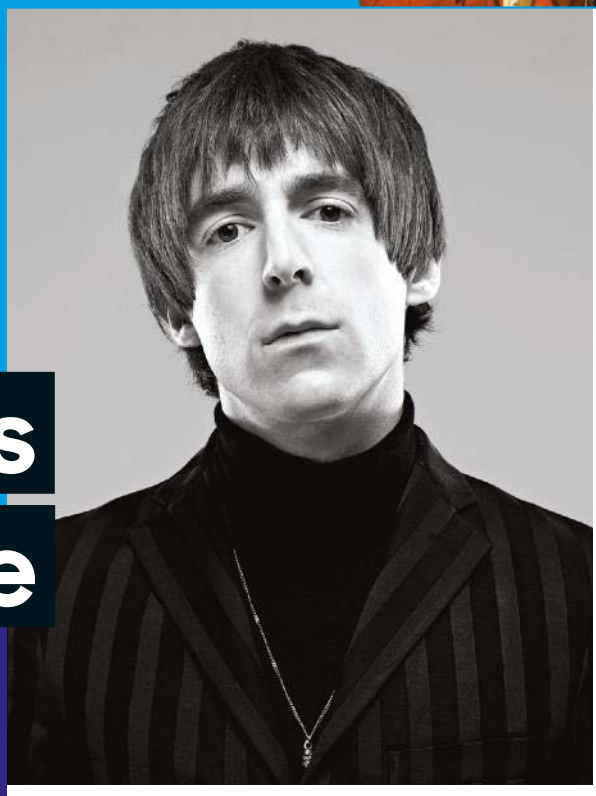
SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE

The Four Tops

T Rex

Miles Kane

Singer-songwriter



Tina Turner

ED MILES, REDFERNS, GETTY

THE FIRST SONG I REMEMBER HEARING
'Baby Love' - The Supremes

"I first heard this song at a family gathering. All those soul records would come out when we got together: The Four Tops' 'Standing In The Shadows Of Love', The Foundations' 'Build Me Up Buttercup'... but 'Baby Love' is the one that stands out. My mum was a big Diana Ross fan and I grew up listening to The Supremes and the Motown classics."

THE FIRST SONG I FELL IN LOVE WITH
'Hang On To Yourself' - David Bowie

"When my mum played this, it was the first time I'd heard a really old-school rock'n'roll tune. The lyrics were so surreal, and put an image in your head. I remember thinking, 'That's so cool, that's what I want to do.' I went to see his exhibition at the V&A, and I took my mum with me. All the clothes, the quality and amount of work, the way he was always trying different things and constantly changing, it was really inspiring."

THE FIRST ALBUM I EVER BOUGHT
'(What's The Story) Morning Glory?' - Oasis

"I heard them on the radio and watched Oasis on *Top Of The Pops*. I remember going to Woolworths to buy the CD. It was around that time that my mum had bought me my own Alba CD/tape player. It was the starting point of me buying my own music."

"I WOULD LIVE FOREVER IF I COULD!"

THE SONG THAT MADE ME WANT TO BE IN A BAND
'20th Century Boy' - T Rex

"There are loads – it's hard to pick just one. But '20th Century Boy' was probably the one that really inspired me when I was a kid. And anything by Bowie."

THE SONG I CAN NO LONGER LISTEN TO
'Lego House' - Ed Sheeran

"Is this the same as a song you hate? Because that Ed Sheeran song, 'Lego House', it just kills me, that shit. I can see why kids like it, but when that comes on, it just makes me squeal. I've never met him and I'm sure he's lovely, but it's not my bag."

THE SONG THAT MAKES ME WANT TO DANCE
'Standing In The Shadows Of Love' - The Four Tops

"I love to dance to the old Motown stuff. The Four Tops are one of my favourite bands. When you play it dead loud, it's so good. I've never got into DJing – I've done it once for a mate but never properly. But the only reason I would do it is to play some tunes, and to dance to them for hours."

THE SONG I DO AT KARAOKE
'Baby! You Oughta Think It Over' - Bobby Womack

"I've been listening to this a lot recently. It's just a great little pop tune. It's not a novelty song or anything, it's just what I'm digging."

THE SONG I CAN'T GET OUT OF MY HEAD
'The World (Is Going Up In Flames)' - Charles Bradley

"He's released two records, and it's on that Daptone label. It's really sort of James Brown. I can't stop listening to it. The catchiest bit is that line, "*The world is going up in flames*". He does loads of "*ooh*"s and screams that go right through your brain."

THE SONG I WISH I'D WRITTEN
'Nutbush City Limits' - Ike & Tina Turner

"It's a tune that has the years in it. I heard it a couple of months ago, and just loved everything about it. The guitar and everything, it's just cool as fuck, man."

THE SONG THAT GETS ME DOWN
'The Drugs Don't Work' - The Verve

"I guess it reminds me of being a kid. I think the story behind it was about his dad dying, and the counsellor and the drugs and all that, but it just reminds me of that time in school. It puts me back in that place."

THE SONG THAT REMINDS ME OF LIVERPOOL
'Don't Let The Sun Catch You Crying' - Gerry & The Pacemakers

"The song isn't about Liverpool, although Gerry & The Pacemakers were from there. I first heard it when I was in my teens and it still reminds me of home, even now. I loved the sentiment of the song and the strings."

THE SONG I WANT PLAYED AT MY FUNERAL
'Live Forever' - Oasis

"It's self-explanatory really. You feel a connection with the lyrics: '*Maybe I just want to fly/I want to live I don't want to die/You and I we're gonna live forever*'. I would live forever if I could. I'm having too much fun!"

NME NEW BAND OF THE WEEK

Menace Beach

A Leeds supergroup emerges – just as long as they can all find the time to make it work...

Ryan Needham and Liza Violet arrived in Leeds without a plan in 2012. They'd moved there from Derby, where "nothing really happens", according to Liza. "We'd go to pubs and just end up speaking to barmen... When you're in a new city you go to some weird places. It takes a while to find the *right* places." Eventually, the duo found exactly what they were looking for – and the right people, too. Menace Beach was formed "out of necessity" after old friend and local man-about-town Owen Brinley (Grammatics, Department M) became their gateway to some of the city's most respected musicians. "He was the one person I knew properly," Ryan says. "I hung out with him a bit and bumped into all these people..."

Nestor Matthews, of Sky Larkin, was the first to be recruited. "He was our dream drummer," explains Liza. MJ of Hookworms used to "slag off" Ryan's old band Komakino on the internet because "he was super-hardcore", but soon even he couldn't resist the allure of playing with them. Along with Matt Spalding of Derby's Mascot Fight, Rob Lee of Pulled Apart By Horses and – when it suits him – Paul Draper of Mansun, they've become a fully fledged unit, and everybody's taking the band completely seriously.

ON NME.COM/NEWMUSIC NOW
▶Stream new EP 'Lowtalker'

The new year is already looking busy. Their sound recalls the seedier side of Britpop – a chaotic squall of messy and melodic seductiveness – but there's an album planned for release in the summer (to be recorded at MJ's Suburban Home studio, naturally), which might see them get a little heavier, Ryan says. "I want to write some rock music. Normally I'll come up with the initial thing and it'll sound really pop-punk, like Blink-182, and then Liza will throw loads of weird guitar lines and synth in." The key to everything for the band, though, is synchronicity. Summer festivals are already being booked, and if they can just keep their diaries free enough, success is surely guaranteed... ■ HAYLEY AVRON

▶THE DETAILS

▶**BASED** Leeds
▶**FOR FANS OF** Pixies, Sleeper
▶**SOCIAL** @MENACE_BEACH
▶**BUY IT NOW** The 'Lowtalker' EP is out now on Memphis Industries
▶**SEE THEM LIVE** Leeds Brudenell Social Club (January 24) and with Drenge at Sheffield Plug (March 1)
▶**BELIEVE IT OR NOT** Mansun's Paul Draper once made Ryan record his vocals topless, under a duvet

Turn the page for more great new music

DAN KENDALL

MORE NEW MUSIC

Goners

Alison Crutchfield of Swearin recently gave Goners a shout out on Twitter, saying "Columbus has the best bands", and it's not hard to see why. 'Teenage Depression' is their best song, reminiscent of Built To Spill and Times New Viking. With all three members of the band taking vocal duties, the self-titled three-track seven-inch captures a versatile new act in their embryonic stages.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/gonersohio
▶HEAR THEM gonersohio.bandcamp.com

NME BUZZ BAND OF THE WEEK
Public Access TV

New York has been devoid of life-affirming new bands for way too long now, but Public Access TV offer hope. A three-piece (singer John pictured right) in their early twenties who play Elvis Costello-influenced indie like they've just invented it, they're the antithesis of the myriad substandard Lower East Side acts who hang onto 2001's coattails while lording it up on their parents' incomes. 'Monaco', PATV's sole song online, sounds more exciting than anything else we've heard from NYC in *ages*.
▶SOCIAL @Public_AccessTV
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/publicaccesstv

Totoake

Santa Cruz's Totoake's debut tracks are chilled-out, surfboard-in-hand cuts of guitar-led gold. Pick of the bunch 'Anyways (Ladada)' saunters along under a brilliantly primitive, classic rock frame and is as mellow as it is melodically charged.
▶SOCIAL @totoake
▶HEAR HIM soundcloud.com/totoake

Communions

Most of the music that's followed Iceage out of the Mayhem rehearsal rooms in Copenhagen has erred towards the stubbornly uncommercial, but this youthful quartet have their eyes on a bigger prize. Their debut seven-inch, out on Posh Isolation, recalls Iceage in its raw romanticism – but the likes of 'Cobblestones' and 'You Go On' are imbued with brittle reverb and a surf-tinged melodicism that points towards something rather warmer than Elias and co's doomed punk elegies.
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/poshisolation

ANDY FORD

Public Access TV

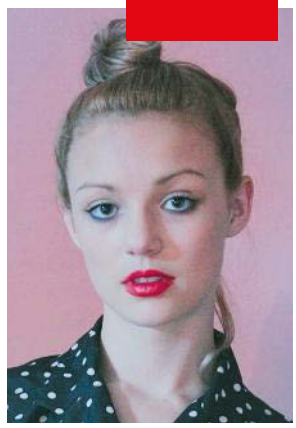
High Hopes

High Hopes is the side project of Fair Ohs drummer Joe Ryan. His latest track 'You Were The Future' channels Ariel Pink through a hazy GarageBand sheen that's rough around the edges, and is taken from his forthcoming debut album. The track reeks of the '80s, Malibu and charity-shop dinner suits, with a gloriously funky guitar solo and mesmerising piano melody.
▶SOCIAL @fairohs
▶HEAR HIM soundcloud.com/suplex

X priest X

Tampa's Maddy Priest tackles indie-banger synths and cut-and-paste basslines with her cotton-candy-soft verses on X priest X's latest drop 'Dark Sun'. Backed by co-producers David Kazyk and Chandler Strang (also of Floridian outfit Saskatchewan), the line-up, and their past involvements in other projects, evokes a sun-baked Chvrches. But Grimes-like whimsical laptop pop is probably a more accurate reference point.
▶SOCIAL @XpriestX_
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/xpriestx

X priest X



Hero Fisher

To put Hero Fisher's potential into context, her first ever gig was supporting The Rolling Stones last summer. A YouTube link of early track 'Fear Not Victorious' is the one to check – a dark-hearted mix of plucked acoustic guitars and a vocal that could be filed near the PJ Harvey section in your collection.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/herofisher

Allez Bartoli

Derry's Allez Bartoli are an experimental band formed in 2010 by multi-instrumentalists Gregory McGeady and Emmet Colton. Both have been active on the city's rock scene individually, but Allez Bartoli is a different proposition, blending moody pop and electronica, à la The xx, Boards Of Canada and At The Drive-In at their most abstract. After six EPs, their latest, 'Lo-tech/Hi-Fi', is about Soviet cosmonauts. ↣

BAND CRUSH

William Doyle

East India Youth

Empress Of

"Empress Of just put out an EP on Double Denim. She's got a really cool voice and I really like her songwriting and production. I saw her performing live and it was great. I don't usually do this, but I've asked for the stems for her current single because I really want to work with it."

China

Cerebral without being boring, it's essential listening.
▶SOCIAL @AllezBartoli
▶HEAR THEM allezbartoli.bandcamp.com

Grimm Grimm

Grimm Grimm, aka Koichi Yamanoha, may hail from Tokyo and currently dwell in London, but his acid-fried psych-folk would feel more at home somewhere far greener. Continuing down the '60s-indebted, otherworldly path perfected by Dutchman Jacco Gardner, Yamanoha's world is one populated by girls making daisy chains and boys in paisley.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/grimmgrimm
▶HEAR HIM soundcloud.com/grimmgrimm

Mowbird

Before Joanna Gruesome were unleashed from South Wales, Mowbird were making similar sounds in the north end of the country. Releasing EPs since late 2010, the Wrexham four-piece issue their debut album on Mark from Islet's Shape Records in February. Expect surfy, synthy, lo-fi guitar pop.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/Mowbird
▶HEAR THEM mowbird.bandcamp.com
▶SEE THEM LIVE Cardiff Dempseys (February 7)

Butter The Children

Alongside the obvious My Bloody Valentine and C86 influences running through New York post-punk act Butter The Children's debut EP, there's also the influence of Larry David and Jerry Seinfeld. The ripped and formidable 'Rochelle Rochelle' references *Seinfeld* episode 'The Understudy', while the fast-paced power pop of 'Prognosis Negative' also nods to the classic sitcom. A gig at Monk's Cafe surely awaits.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/ButterTheChildren
▶HEAR THEM butterthe-children.bandcamp.com

Happy Diving

This lot make scrappy, grunge-infused jams that are incredibly loud and charmingly sloppy. 'Complacent', the second track from their debut EP, sports an emo sensibility in the style of Pity Sex while rocking the same groove in their riffs that grunge maestros Daylight do so well. Look out for 'Happy Diving', just released on Father/Daughter Records.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/happydivingca
▶HEAR THEM happydiving.bandcamp.com

Butter The Children

Neighbour

There must be something in the water in Kettering. Hot on the heels of Temples come Neighbour, a band of fellow Midlands psych-pedlars who've cropped up touting debut track 'Super 8'. It's a swirling opus that owes much to The Stone Roses circa 1989 while also recalling the charms of Childhood.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/officialneighbour
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/neighbourofficial

Half Loon

With a sound that calls to mind Syd Barrett teaming up with Connan Mockasin, Half Loon scream experience far beyond their six months together, twinning layers of psychedelic melody with raw, jagged guitars. Favouring a wall-of-sound production, their grandiose aim is to make "music to turn to when there's nothing else left". Single 'Reverie' is out in February on RIP Records.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/halfloon
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/halfloon

BUZZ WORDS: MATT WILKINSON, DAVID RENSHAW, HUW NESBITT, TOM WALTERS, LOUIS PATTISON, NEIL WOOD, LISA WRIGHT, TIM HAKKI, DAN CARSON, JAKE MAY, KATIA GANFIELD PHOTOS: DAN KENDALL, KEITH MARLOWE

Radar NEWS ROUND UP

KANYE GETS DRENCHED

Evian Christ – aka Ellesmere Port man Joshua Leary – has signed for publishing with Kanye West's GOOD Music. Leary left his footprints all over 'Yeezus' after West caught his Tri Angle mixtape 'Kings And Them' in 2012. His debut EP 'Waterfalls' is due for release in early 2014.

THE DISTRICTS' NEW EP

After causing a stir in their native US at the end of 2013, Philadelphia hot prospects The Districts release their new EP (self-titled) via Fat Possum on January 27. The recording includes a new version of 'Funeral Beds', which is on NME.COM/newmusic now, along with another exclusive EP track.

All We Are

The Districts

ALL WE ARE GET CAREY'D AWAY

Liverpool newcomers All We Are have been preparing for their tour supporting Warpaint by hitting the studio with producer of the moment Dan Carey. "We tracked together live," says bassist Guro Gikling, "and he put on his smoke machine and lasers to create the right atmosphere."

SPRING KING'S 'MUMMA' LOVE

Manchester act Spring King release their first proper single in February, a double A-side entitled 'Mumma'/'Mumma Pt II'. The tunes sound different enough, though – the former a rabble-rousing rocker, the latter something more joyous, youthful and acoustic, but still punk.

▶For daily new music recommendations and exclusive tracks and videos go to NME.COM/NEWMUSIC

Axxa/Abraxas

Axxa/Abraxas

Like labelmates Mac DeMarco and Alex Calder, Captured Tracks' latest recruit deals in loveably ramshackle psych-pop. The project of 23-year-old Ben Asbury, Axxa/Abraxas' debut album is out in March. In the meantime, 'I Almost Fell' sounds like a poppier take on Television Personalities and Neil Young, Asbury undercutting the joy with self-deprecating lyrics and a lilting melody.

▶**SOCIAL** facebook.com/pages/axxaabraxas

▶**HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/axxa-abraxas

Nuns

With his self-proclaimed use of "poltergeist loops", Atlanta's Nuns is an intriguing find. His latest track, 'Blood Red Snow', with its melancholy, Americana-tinged riffs, is weirdo pop at its finest. Fans of Coma Cinema will find a lot to love here.

▶**SOCIAL** facebook.com/social/NUNS

▶**HEAR HIM** apollogeeze.bandcamp.com

China

China Yggstrom is another of Sweden's brightest pop hopes. She co-produces her hazy, '80s-leaning synth bangers alongside the ever-present Daniel Tjader (Korallreven/Radio Dept), and the first fruits of this partnership, 'Hide', hints at a love of not only vintage bubblegum and disco-pop, but the darker, obsessive fringes of Scandinavia's flourishing diva scene too.

▶**SOCIAL** facebook.com/chinamusicse

▶**HEAR HER** soundcloud.com/china_se

Decent Lovers

"*We smell like diesel fuel and lemon balm, it's me and you*", warbles Elijah Wyman over detuned guitars, thumping bass and scattershot percussion on 'Keep It Together'. It's a typically esoteric lyric from the zany Wyman, whose new project combines Foals' indie-rock braininess and Tom Vek's spiky riffs with the euphoric, rhythmic punch of Animal Collective.

▶**SOCIAL** facebook.com/thedecentlovers

▶**HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/decentlovers

Salvia Plath

New Zealander Daniel Johann has much to offer under his Salvia Plath guise. His cassette 'Melanchole' was released this year on Ozona Records, and it's full of oddball exploits. Reminiscent of Phil Elverum's work with The Microphones, this is hazy, lo-fi dream pop at its best.

▶**SOCIAL** facebook.com/salviaplath

▶**HEAR HIM** salviaplathband.bandcamp.com

Radar LABEL OF THE WEEK

Weird World Record Co

▶**FOUNDED** 2011 by Jack Shankly

▶**BASED** London

▶**KEY RELEASES** **Melody's Echo Chamber** – Melody's Echo Chamber (2012), **Peaking Lights** – Lucifer (2012), **Jaakko Eino Kalevi** – Dreamzone (2013)

▶**RADAR SAYS** Weird by name, weird by nature, the Domino imprint has a reputation for seeking out eclectic, leftfield gems with the odd mainstream mainstay – like Melody's Echo Chamber – creeping in too.

NEW SOUNDS FROM WAY OUT

This week's columnist

HONOR TITUS

Cerebral Ballzy

IN THE DREAMHOUSE

Even the most reserved Honor Titus enthusiast will know that I love my shoegaze/dreampop/goth records. **Eyeshadow** weaves within these genres with such a delicate and delightful creep. Lush and beautiful textures à la Slowdive mix with a moving, almost jazzy rhythm section like Tones On Tail's finer efforts. I'd be lying to say I'm not stoked on just seeing the sleeve of their new record 'Bone Structure', a dark, swinging tune as dreamy as Siouxsie & The Banshees on codeine.

My next tip is **Black Marble**. I played guitar in the outfit at its inception. They've been playing around town and Europe, here and there. They're dark and cold and capture the finer moments of the darkwave bands of yesteryear. Some lazily compare them to the likes of Joy Division. A more comprehensive listen will give the listener thoughts of The Names, The Chills and contemporary colleague John Maus. 'Pretender' is a good place to start, 'cos you'll surely get addicted to the dark swing of it, just like Eyeshadow.

Another contemporary band I've always admired is **The Spits** (above). They shred and they're mega underrated. They're one of those bands that envelop you with the sheer character of their sound. Simple yet addictive riffs will rattle in your noggin for months. 'All I Want' is their soft side, while 'Black Kar' is a dark song about transportation for the departed.

Connan Mockasin is a talented songwriter. While touring with The Horrors a while back, Rhys Webb (a person who I've exchanged countless garage gems with) showed me his quirky and swinging work. I had the pleasure of hanging with him briefly at some festival and he is polite and well versed in sweet tunes. Good taste is something you don't find much, sadly. 'It's Choade My Dear' is chilled and strange, like dropping a tab at a performance piece. His videos are quite the endeavour and alert the viewer to the artistic foundation at his core.

"The Spits' simple yet addictive riffs will rattle in your noggin for months"

I feel obliged to say that writing the above was no easy feat for a dude who is constantly enamoured of the sounds of yesteryear, but the artists listed are a few that are doing something special right now. I opted not to write of contemporaries who would be obvious and could easily be found on the pages of any music mag. Often, good tunes have to be sought out. SO SHRED ON AND BUY BALLZY'S NEW ALBUM IN 2014!

Next week: Courtney Barnett

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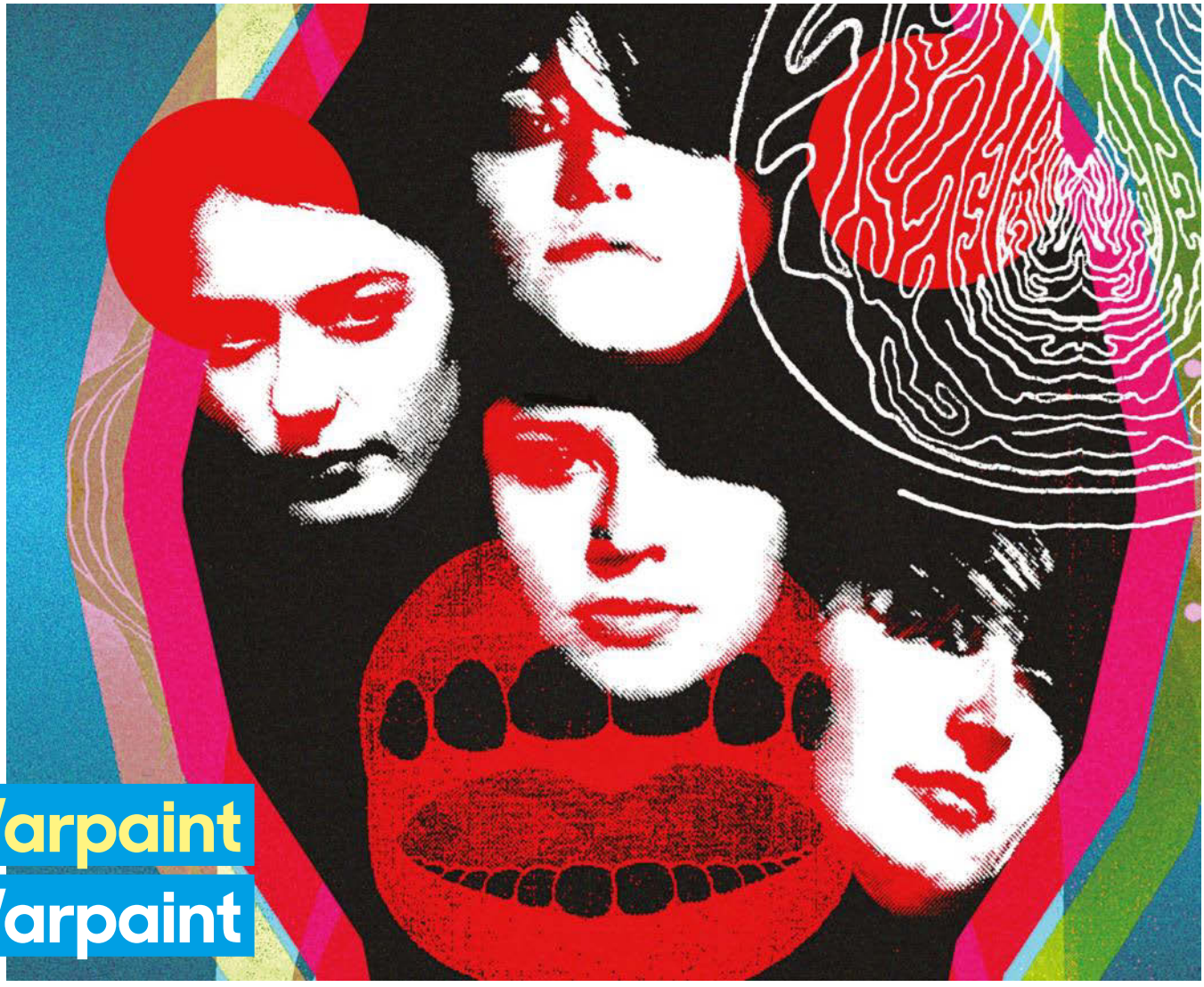
Reviews



Warpaint
Warpaint

The LA band enlist Foals producer Flood and Radiohead mastermind Nigel Godrich for their deeply personal second

When Los Angeles band Warpaint's debut album 'The Fool' came out in late 2010, it was a soundtrack to late-night, solitary strolls through empty streets. It came on like an undiscovered tropical disease, its drunken spell pulling you into the underbelly of life. Its loose 'songs' were woozy concoctions, sprawling into unexpected directions, distracting you from the world – and from Warpaint themselves. The quartet kind of hid within their beguiling jams, mere facilitators of a groove that they'd noodle out with no regard for time or space. 'The Fool' was years in the making. The line-up changed throughout the process, revolving around guitarist Theresa Wayman, singer Emily Kokal and bassist extraordinaire Jenny Lee Lindberg. They acted strangely, like a gang of giggling kooks, impenetrable to the outside world yet able to make their music work. You wouldn't have been surprised if they'd never got round to making a second record. They could have just faded away into obscurity, a passing fling.

Well, thank fuck they didn't. Say hello to Warpaint 2.0. If 'The Fool' presented them as ethereal hippies with musical nous, 'Warpaint' drives them forward as masters of their talent, seriously loaded with ambition and prowess. The gearshift is a result of two massive influences. First: Stella Mozgawa. The Aussie drummer joined Warpaint to tour 2009 EP 'Exquisite Corpse' once the majority of 'The Fool' had been written. It's now hard to imagine Warpaint without her. She is their beating heart, and 'Warpaint' is her first foray into collaborating on the writing process. From the opening beats of 'Intro' and 'Keep It Healthy', Mozgawa directs what's to come with her unparalleled skills behind the kit, developing intricate grooves with Lindberg. As a rhythmic duo their

ILLUSTRATION: JIMMY TURRELL

chemistry is almost supernatural. Second: the foursome have welcomed in two technical experts – producer Mark Ellis, aka Flood, who's worked with Foals and U2; and Radiohead mastermind Nigel Godrich, who mixes 'Love Is To Die' and 'Feeling Alright'. Those two tracks are bona fide *tunes*, with (shock, horror) choruses and a crisper, more direct sound. The latter is, in essence, an R&B song.

Despite their increased focus, Warpaint remain aloof. And therein lies their power. This is a deeply personal record, unequivocally sensual. 'Disco//Very' is their most fearless move yet, descending into an animalistic shambles with predatory lyrics ("*Like cyanide, it's poison/ She'll eat you alive*") and a prowling bassline. It's the foreplay before the gently rousing 'Go In', which sounds like a seductive take on 'The Siamese Cat Song' by Peggy Lee. 'CC' continues the lustful pursuit, growing dizzier as the lyrics and chords make you beg for more. 'Drive' and 'Son' are new territory for the band, the former containing a gorgeous climactic key change, evidence of a newfound penchant for control. It's immensely fulfilling. Warpaint haven't just learned to read each other, they've learned to read their audience.

In fact, listening to 'Warpaint' is like being in a relationship with someone who's emotionally unavailable. You press your ear closer, trying to make out those still-muffled lyrics that are *just* out of range. It's a record that reaches out to touch you, but won't let you touch it back. It's an intimate moment with a complete stranger who draws you near, invites you in and then spins you out. And when it finishes? Poof! The stranger's gone and you wonder if you'll meet them again. Will we meet Warpaint again? Here's hoping. ■ EVE BARLOW

9

▶THE DETAILS

▶**RELEASE DATE** January 20 ▶**LABEL** Rough Trade ▶**PRODUCER** Mark Ellis, aka Flood ▶**LENGTH** 51:10 ▶**TRACKLISTING** ▶1. Intro ▶2. Keep It Healthy ▶3. Love Is To Die ▶4. Hi ▶5. Biggy ▶6. Teese ▶7. Disco//Very ▶8. Go In ▶9. Feeling Alright ▶10. CC ▶11. Drive ▶12. Son ▶**BEST TRACK** Drive

PRODUCER FLOOD'S GREATEST HITS

Nick Cave And The Bad Seeds
Tender Prey 1988

A bleak, post-punk triumph, featuring doomy death penalty jam 'The Mercy Seat' and the jiggy gothic dancefloor filler 'Deanna'.

PJ Harvey
To Bring You My Love 1995

Polly Jean's third pushed her into the mainstream, and marked her out as one of the UK's biggest talents.

The Smashing Pumpkins
Mellon Collie And The Infinite Sadness 1995

A stratospheric double album boasting the full-bodied, string-laden '1979' and 'Tonight Tonight'.

The Killers
Sam's Town 2006

'When You Were Young' and 'Read My Mind' proved they didn't need Auto-Tune and Las Vegas gloss to shift millions of units.

MORE ALBUMS

Big Ups
18 Hours Of Static
Tough Love

Brooklyn's Big Ups have been ripping up New York's dive venues recently. But though the toilet circuit suits their scuzzy snarl-punk perfectly, this debut album shows they're setting their sights much higher. '18 Hours Of Static' captures the frenzied nihilism of their live shows but also transcends it to become an incisive indictment of modern life. 'Wool' and 'Disposer' thud along with heavy, knuckle-dragging malaise before exploding into a rage of pure and brilliant beauty, while 'Little Kid', 'TMI' and 'Fresh Meat' sound like the Melvins fucking early Placebo while listening to Black Flag. A collection of anthems for a new tomorrow, made by the disaffected youth of today.
■ MISCHA PEARLMAN

8

The Rifles
None The Wiser
Cooking Vinyl

Since 2004, The Rifles have ploughed a very particular furrow, releasing album after small-to-midsize-venue-filling album of spiky, straightforward and defiantly unfashionable guitar pop that's aware of its limitations and takes care to play to its strengths. They're not the most inspiring of bands, but there's no denying they're good enough at what they do, and the likes of 'Heebie Jeebies' and 'Catch Her In The Rye' (good song, awful title) justify Joel Stoker's reputation as a sturdy tunesmith. Yet while true believers might not mind the record's overall lack of variety, for anyone new to the band there's little on 'None The Wiser' to separate them from the indie-rock chaff.
■ BARRY NICOLSON

5

Against Me! Transgender Dysphoria Blues

American punk that confronts death, drug addiction and fascism

Commercial US punk rock isn't known for its thoughtful tackling of weighty issues. Despite Green Day trying their hardest, since Rancid's semi-political dabblings, by and large the genre has become more of a soundtrack to 2am beer pong tournaments than a spotlight on persecution and prejudice. Against Me!'s sixth album, however, tackles singer Laura Jane Grace's recent transition from male to female, and encompasses death, drug addiction and fascism – but you can totally still skank to it. 'Osama Bin Laden As The Crucified Christ' has all the friskiness of Fidlar but references the death of Mussolini, and 'Dead Friend' is an impassioned tribute to a late buddy. But it's Grace's personal journey that has the most impact: 'Drinking With The Jocks' is the sort of raging polemic that proves the hardcore spirit of Black Flag is still alive and kicking.
■ LEONIE COOPER

7

▶THE DETAILS

▶**RELEASE DATE** January 20 ▶**LABEL** Xtra Mile ▶**PRODUCER** Laura Jane Grace ▶**LENGTH** 28:43 ▶**TRACKLISTING** ▶1. Transgender Dysphoria Blues ▶2. True Trans Soul Rebel ▶3. Unconditional Love ▶4. Drinking With The Jocks ▶5. Osama Bin Laden As The Crucified Christ ▶6. FUCKMYLIFE666 ▶7. Dead Friend ▶8. Two Coffins ▶9. Paralytic States ▶10. Black Me Out ▶**BEST TRACK** Drinking With The Jocks

Mode Moderne
Occult Delight
Light Organ

'Occult Delight' is the second album from Vancouver's Mode Moderne, and once more they draw a cultural bridge between modern-day Canada and the greyed tones of 1980s Manchester – a nod to Joy Division's density of emotion here, a fleeting echo of Morrissey's vocal tics there. But there's plenty to elevate the band beyond copycat status. The tracks flow with ease: 'Grudges Crossed' has a strong melodic hook; 'Thieving Baby's Breath', a stark sense of industrial alienation. Then the gloom is lifted by the deviant lilt of 'Unburden Yourself'. A gently addictive and well-balanced offering.
■ HAYLEY AVRON

7

Reviews

Thee Silver Mt Zion Memorial Orchestra
Fuck Off Get Free We Pour Light On Everything
Constellation

Behold, the Montreal band's seventh and heaviest album. Having begun as a side project for Godspeed! You Black Emperor's Efrim Menuck, their sound has ranged from post-rock experimentalism to the hinterlands of drone. 'Austerity Blues' sounds like Fairport Convention's hypnotic 'A Sailor's Life' played in a wind tunnel, 'Fuck Off Get Free' has the kind of unsettling noise you expect from Godspeed!, and the eerie violins on 'Take Away These Early Grave Blues' evoke a death march. It's a moving record. The only catch is, when they dial down the intensity on 'What We Loved Was Not Enough' they sound like Arcade Fire at their most mawkish. **7**

■ HUW NESBITT

Mutual Benefit
Love's Crushing Diamond
Soft Eyes

On the surface, Jordan Lee's debut proper as Mutual Benefit is breezy and beatific, the intricate piano, incidental wind chimes and light strings forging the sensation of hazy summer days. Listen closely to Lee's chewed wisp of a voice, however, and a heartbreaking narrative bobs to the surface. Faced with a loved one sinking into a deep depression, he struggles with the fact that dumb love is all he has to offer them: he can only ever comfort, not cure. As such, Lee's lyrics are sometimes sentimental to the point of seeming trite, but they're logical for a situation where love and pain have become so overwhelming that simple statements seem the most trustworthy. **9**

■ LAURA SNAPES

The Hidden Cameras
Age Evil Evil

Toronto collective The Hidden Cameras came to our shores a decade ago, clad in nappies and balaclavas and peddling an upfront songbook of gay sex, religious criticism and indie-pop in-jokes. Joel Gibb's sprawling, string-driven band were soon eclipsed internationally by their epic friends Arcade Fire, but they remain a distinctive voice. Sixth album 'Age' finds the group's stirring chamber pop augmented by dense new wave and dub reggae sounds that propel Gibb back to his youth, addressing S&M induction on 'Skin & Leather' and adolescent family pressure on the intense 'Gay Goth Scene'. Mournful, moving and minor key, 'Age' suggests The Hidden Cameras' defiant sexual politics are still vital. **7**

■ STUART HUGGETT

Vaadat Charigim
The World Is Well Lost
Burger

If you wanted to reduce Vaadat Charigim to a single, sellable sentence, it would doubtless run something along the lines of 'The Israeli shoegaze group whose singer sounds like a Hebrew Morrissey.' It'd probably be enough to pique curiosity about the Tel Aviv trio, too, given the eternal scarcity of Israeli shoegaze groups whose singers... well, you know. Yet it's not curiosity that will keep you coming back to this debut album, but the swirling squall conjured across its eight tracks, all sung in frontman Juval Haring's rich Hebraic drone. The apocalyptic video for 'Odisea' suggests Vadaat Charigim have a very definite agenda, but for the rest of us 'The World Is Well Lost' is an esoteric mystery, left wonderfully open to interpretation. **8**

■ BARRY NICOLSON

Mogwai
Rave Tapes

They're not as anarchic as they once were, but the Glaswegians have found plenty more crescendos to climb

Perhaps it's inevitable for a group who've carved such a long and unbroken furrow, but Mogwai seem to be approaching national treasure status: they are the band you look to first if you're after some undulating, affecting, occasionally extremely loud instrumental rock. Personally, I can't wholly shake a lingering disappointment that their anarchic edge has blunted over time – watching them reduce a room full of Manic Street Preachers fans to tearful, pint-tossing anger with a demented 'Like Herod' is up there in my fond gig-going memories. But the finest examples of their more recent work are those that highlight their reflective, poignant side: take their score for French undead drama *Les Revenants*, a masterful explication of the show's uncanny melding of love, grief and terror.

From the off, 'Rave Tapes' hits some familiar Mogwai buttons. Flippant titles ('Simon Ferocious', 'Master Card') are slightly deceptive signposts to intricate, largely wordless rock songs that paint complex emotional pictures. But there's also a new slant towards electronics, which is key to some standout moments. 'Remurdered' broods and glowers for three minutes before springing into life on a baroque synth filigree that recalls Italian horror soundtrackers Goblin. 'The Lord Is Out Of Control' employs vocoder and electronic drums for a melancholy waltz more serene than its title implies. 'Master Card' is, essentially, Shellac with keyboards.

Elsewhere, familiarity begins to nag. Mogwai may have outgrown the quiet-loud dynamics but they've replaced them with a different sort of predictability, and tracks like 'No Medicine For Regret' or 'Deesh' doodle away for ages without evoking anything in particular.

Consequently, 'Rave Tapes' feels most compelling when they imprint some kind of message on their moody abstractions. 'Repelish' unfurls to a voiceover from Lee Cohen (a singer from Chicago who was also on the 1999 Mogwai track 'Stanley Kubrick'), a simmering tension building as he considers the satanic messages implanted in reverse on Led Zeppelin's 'Stairway To Heaven'. The Stuart Braithwaite-sung 'Blues Hour', meanwhile, is a slowcore ballad that speaks of distant horizons and mighty endurance. 'Rave Tapes' doesn't stray far from the Mogwai comfort zone, but nor is it the sound of a band clapped out. Nineteen years in, there are still crescendos left to climb. **7**

■ LOUIS PATTISON

▶THE DETAILS

▶**RELEASE DATE** January 20 ▶**LABEL** Rock Action ▶**PRODUCER** Paul Savage ▶**LENGTH** 48:46
▶**TRACKLISTING** ▶1. Heard About You Last Night ▶2. Simon Ferocious ▶3. Remurdered ▶4. Hexon Bogon ▶5. Repelish ▶6. Master Card ▶7. Deesh ▶8. Blues Hour ▶9. No Medicine For Regret ▶10. The Lord Is Out Of Control ▶**BEST TRACK** Remurdered

Various Artists Boats

(Clockwise from top left) Rustie, Deerhoof, Dan Deacon, No Age

The cream of downtempo electronica sample an Indian children's choir

The Everything Is New Project is the work of Edinburgh arts collective Transgressive North, who paid for Scottish act Marram to record the children's choir at the Light Of Love Home And School in southeast India alongside Jarvis Cocker, Owen Pallett and writer Irvine Welsh. That record – a stew of naive singing self-described as "the Sagrada Família of post-rave art pop" – is reviewed below. This record, 'Boats', is its sequel. It takes the massed voices on 'Sun Choir' and offers them up as raw strips of sound. The challenge set for the cream of downtempo electronica, from Gang Gang Dance to El Guincho, Four Tet and Yacht, was to create a track from these samples. Basically, it's Band Aid as curated by the second room at Fabric.

The kids' voices, stripped of context and mutated electronically into whatever wash of sound each artist chose, creates an effect with the same warmth as Panda Bear's 'Person Pitch' album. The sound of bright, clear young voices, drenched in reverb and singing in an indecipherable foreign language, turns out to be perfectly suited to the key collaborators.

Dan Deacon uses his slot to dispense with instruments altogether and just tweak a dazzling cascade of layered voices as far as he can (very far). Rustie piles extra layers of euphoria on top of his usual *Space Invaders* trickery. Gang Gang Dance find themselves utterly at home forging hypnotic world music, but even a past master of this sort of thing like El Guincho can't quite find the hook he needs to save 'Botes' from its own repetitiveness. Deerhoof take a low-slung approach, and it works. Of the lesser-knowns, Max Tundra's tight 'You, The Living' manages to swerve some of the clichés by picking up the pace and carving the voices into microdot samples, while Victoria Bergsman's 'In Love This Time' under her Taken By Trees alias achieves a sad sweetness by bringing her own voice to the fore. There's plenty that's great, a fair bit of the indifferent and not much bad.

7

■ GAVIN HAYNES

▶THE DETAILS

▶**RELEASE DATE** January 20 ▶**LABEL** Transgressive North ▶**PRODUCERS** All songs self-produced ▶**LENGTH** 2:11:26 ▶**TRACKLISTING** DISC ONE ▶1. Rustie – Boatsss ▶2. Max Tundra – You, The Living ▶3. doseone – Weight In Song ▶4. White Hinterland – Like A Dove ▶5. Taken By Trees – In Love This Time ▶6. Capybara – Angelo ▶7. Ramona Falls – On The Line ▶8. Son Lux – My Father's Children ▶9. Matthewdavid – Music Will Change The World ▶10. The Ruby Suns – You Can Talk ▶11. No Age – Birds Song ▶12. Deerhoof – Play The Hand ▶13. Califone – Those Mountains Are God's Teeth ▶14. Four Tet – Gillie Amma, I Love You DISC TWO ▶1. Dan Deacon – Glace Voices ▶2. Lucky Dragons – Between Suns ▶3. High Places – Future's Just Ahead ▶4. Keepaway – You're Silk ▶5. Yacht – Icarus Complex ▶6. El Guincho – Botes ▶7. Sun Airway – Blue City/Sun City ▶8. Roxymore – Ask Iru ▶9. A Sunny Day In Glasgow – Hey Tiger! ▶10. Bear In Heaven – The Green ▶11. Slanter – Sarsaparilla ▶12. Gang Gang Dance – Upside Dawn ▶13. Julian Lynch – Naava ▶14. Physical Forms – Sound Lie ▶15. Marram – Transgressor ▶**BEST TRACK** Rustie – Boatsss

Marram
Sun Choir
Transgressive North

Years in the making, 'Sun Choir' finds Marram, the music arm of Scottish arts collective Transgressive North, recording the voices of children at a home for underprivileged kids in India. They then use the samples in tracks that veer between alt.pop and trip-hop. On 'Valuables' – which features former Clouddead rapper/producer doseone and lyrics from Irvine Welsh – there's even all-out techno. There are other stellar guests, too: Jarvis Cocker contributes to two songs, 'What If We' and 'Falling From The Sun', and Final Fantasy man and Arcade Fire arranger Owen Pallet adds his wide-eyed signature to the ecstatic 'With Us Instead'. Highly ambitious and original stuff, created in aid of the Scottish Love In Action charity. ■ PHIL HEBBLETHWAITE

8

Damien Jurado
Brothers And Sisters Of The Eternal Son
Secretly Canadian

A dozen albums in, Seattle singer-songwriter Damien Jurado has finally found an indentity that suits him – a one-man Crosby, Stills & Nash. Produced by fellow offbeat troubadour Richard Swift, 'Brothers And Sisters...' bills itself as a concept album, a road movie with no end, but the songs are tight, the meaning incidental and any big ideas play second fiddle to bewitching tunes and delicate harmonies. Sometimes Jurado lets rip, gearing up to a shamanic groove on 'Silver Donna', giving it a Grateful Dead freakout on 'Silver Timothy' and test-driving syncopated psych-rock on 'Magic Number', but usually he's plucking away on tender strums like 'Silver Katherine' and 'Metallic Cloud'. ■ MATTHEW HORTON

7

PLAY IT AGAIN

RECENTLY RATED IN NME

Patterns
Waking Lines
"Dreamlike states are achieved by combining sounds that hark back to Cocteau Twins, with the more chillwave-y transatlantic influences of Youth Lagoon." (*NME*, January 4) **8**

Stephen Malkmus & The Jicks
Wig Out At Jagbags
"The sound of a man who has enough distance for nostalgia, but knows he's too old to do it all again – the equivalent of a pipe and slippers." (*NME*, January 4) **7**

East India Youth
Total Strife Forever
"The music feels highly personal and warm, open and sketch-like. Well executed, quite odd and full of promise – exactly what you want from a debut." (*NME*, January 11) **8**

I Break Horses
Chiaroscuro
"Through the darker passages of 'You Burn' or 'Berceuse' she's a softer Zola Jesus or a less forbidding Planningtorock, and when she finds a big chorus on 'Weigh True Words' it could be Chvrches." (*NME*, January 11) **7**

Bruce Springsteen
High Hopes
"Bruce Springsteen is not most artists. His 18th record is notable for giving his unfathomably sexy version of Suicide's 'Dream Baby Dream' a home. Still The Boss." (*NME*, January 11) **8**

NME GIG OF THE WEEK

Wolf Alice

KOKO

London

Dec 31

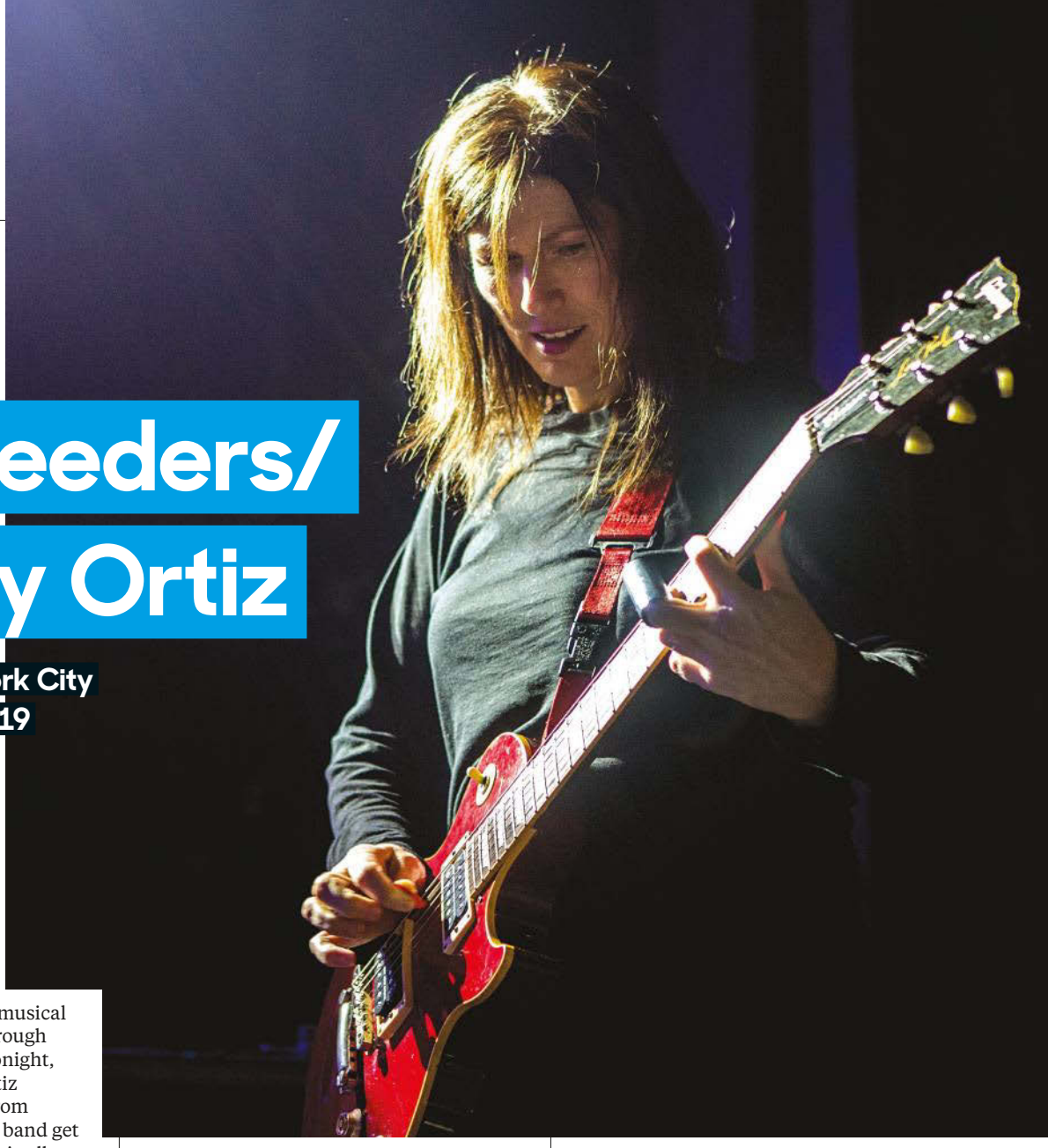
The Londoners kick and scream their way into 2014 with some post-grunge thrashing

"Punch drunk, dumbstruck, pot luck, happy happy!" We wish. KOKO has decided to close all the bars at 10 minutes to midnight, so the New Year is rung in with empty glasses all round. Wolf Alice face an uphill struggle to save 2014 – and a spangly party dress doesn't go far to disguise the un-merrymaking slant to Ellie Rowsell's tortured post-grunge smashers. 'Fluffy' is anything but, 'Your Love's Whore' would be a downer in our drink (if we could get one), and even that chorus line from 'Blush' is delivered with a sardonic sneer. Tonight Wolf Alice bring in 2014 kicking and screaming with an angry celebration inspired by Hole, The Breeders, Blondie, The Joy Formidable and Lanterns On The Lake. 'Blush' is rock's new anthem to torment, 'She' is pure thrash panache and 'You're A Germ"s anti-countdown *"1-2-3-4-5-6-7... YOU AIN'T GOING TO HEAVEN!"* is as euphoric as it is spiritually unforgiving. It ends with their mates' bands (including Austin from Swim Deep, pictured left with Wolf Alice singer Ellie Rowsell) invading the stage for a cover of Robbie Williams' 'Millennium', sprayed champagne and lots of stagediving. Lupine new year, everyone.

■ MARK BEAUMONT

8

JORDAN HUGHES



The Breeders/ Speedy Ortiz

Webster Hall, New York City
Thursday, December 19

Two bands, two generations, one sound. Kim Deal's group play classic albums 'Pod' and 'Last Splash' in full. Boston newcomers Speedy Ortiz pay homage

It's a funny thing, the way musical influences trickle down through the generations. First up tonight, Massachusetts quartet Speedy Ortiz demonstrate all they've learned from The Breeders. Then Kim Deal and band get together onstage to play their classic albums 'Pod' and 'Last Splash' (released in 1990 and 1993 respectively) in full, a move to thrill both the fans who loved them back then and those closer to the age of the albums themselves. Tonight demonstrates The Breeders' uncorroded mastery of a sound that, decades later, up-and-coming bands like Parquet Courts, Waxahatchee, and Potty Mouth study avidly. "Breeders", as it turns out, was a prescient name for a band who continue to spawn so many would-be heirs.

IT'S CLEAR THE BAND ARE ENJOYING THEIR NIGHT AS MUCH AS THE CROWD. "THAT WAS BEAUTIFUL, KELLEY," KIM SAYS TO HER SISTER

As one such group, Speedy Ortiz feel a bit like a Breeders covers band. Their deliberate, low-slung basslines – clear products of the Kim Deal school of no-frills songwriting – build the foundations for the other elements of their tracks to live inside, and the vocals are in keeping with the non-committal, earthen sweetness listeners might associate with the headliners. Watching their opening set feels something like eating a ham sandwich from the deli before sitting down to Christmas dinner. During 'Taylor Swift', Speedy Ortiz's standout ode to loving and leaving boyfriends of all stripes, the band's melding of current-day pop cultural references and thudding, chunky melodies feels especially representative of the 2013 graduating class of Breeders acolytes who've populated American indie over the past year.

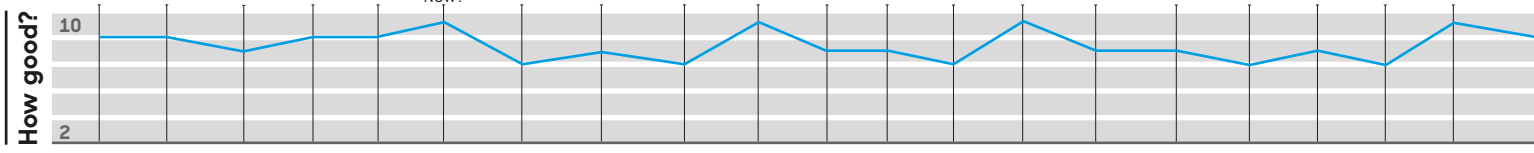
When The Breeders themselves take the stage, the audience's reaction is surprisingly muted. Yet, somehow, this seems respectful and quite appropriate, the right sort of reception for a band who'll kick off a show with the quietly impassioned, smart-alecky 'New Year'. The unhurried melody of 'Cannonball' doesn't slam-dance, it sways, and its movements are mirrored by the

ADELA LOCONTE, JENN FIVE

The Breeders

SETLIST

NEW YEAR	CANNON-BALL	INVISIBLE MAN	NO ALOHA	ROI	DO YOU LOVE ME NOW?	FLIPSIDE	I JUST WANNA GET ALONG	MAD LUCAS	DIVINE HAMMER	SOS	HAG	SAINTS	DRIVIN' ON 9	ROI (REPRISE)	GLORIOUS	DOE	HAPPINESS IS A WARM GUN	OH!	HELLBOUND



crowd. The drips and bends of the band's instruments provide the perfect habitat for Kim Deal's sweet voice. Kim and Kelley Deal grin at each other constantly. They lean into their performance of 'Do You Love Me Now?' in almost half time, as if to give themselves room to bask in the audience's swooning affirmation.

The Breeders have little trouble recreating the magic captured so long ago on their albums – after all, as Kim banters at one point, "We're using the same Minimoog we did 20 years ago!" This kind of dedication to perfecting every nuance pays off, and after the final notes of a highly polished version of 'I Just Wanna Get Along', it's clear the band are enjoying their night as much as the crowd. "That was beautiful, Kelley," Kim compliments her sister. The room is thick with an easy, unforced pleasantness, and a glance around yields a high return of audience members holding hands with their companions. Everyone loosens up as the night progresses, and the band jokily shrugs and pulls "Aw, shucks!" faces as people openly holler cheers throughout the entirety of 'Drivin' On 9'.

Although we're given ample time to savour 'Last Splash', it becomes clear as The Breeders embark on debut album 'Pod' that this pleasant dilly-dallying is not to last. By their usually dippy-dreamy Beatles cover, 'Happiness Is A Warm Gun', they're galloping along at a much quicker clip. This is because, as Kim explains, Webster Hall has given strict time limitations to the band in order to make sure they finish before the venue hosts another event at 11. Midway through 'Pod', the band seems uncharacteristically rushed as they attempt to wring every note out of the tracklist. The carefree tone of the evening gives way to a more frenzied atmosphere, but the band still slays on drum-kit-abusing tracks like 'Iris' and the more pared-down 'Metal Man'. Ultimately, the time crunch has the unintended effect of enlivening the music in a way not heard on the album itself.

Before quickly being shooed offstage, The Breeders profusely thank the audience, and the lights come up not a second after. Often imitated but never bettered, The Breeders still make the last – and loudest – splash.

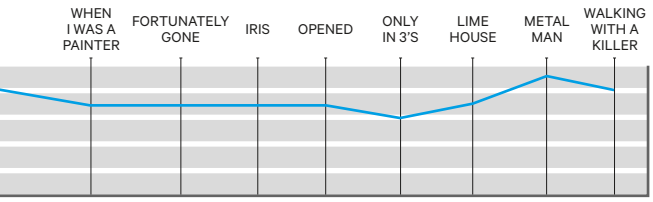
7

■ AMY ROSE SPIEGEL

Speedy Ortiz

SETLIST

▶Taylor Swift
▶Tiger Tank
▶Casper (1995)
▶Fun
▶Plough
▶No Below
▶Silver Spring
▶Basketball
▶Hexxy



MORE GIGS

Toy
Bermuda Triangle, Brighton
Wednesday, December 18

The black-clad members of Toy materialise out of a cloud of dry ice, backlit by flickering strobe, and don't so much launch into 'Conductor', the ticking instrumental opening track on last year's 'Join The Dots', as fade slowly into it. As the Brighton band shift gear into the more solid form of 'Motoring', Tom Dougall's diffident vocals are mixed way back, and the band are enveloped in a fog of reverb that struggles to lift for the rest of the show. It's a suffocating experience, and only the spacious rhythms of 'Kopter' and 'Join The Dots' take flight. The latter song's rush of synths provides the sole moment that slices through the murk tonight.

6

■ STUART HUGGETT

Charlie Boyer & The Voyeurs
The Old Blue Last, London
Tuesday, December 31

Charlie Boyer & The Voyeurs' final set of 2013 is split in half by tonight's countdown to midnight. Buoyed by the start of a new year, the second half of the set fizzes with a confidence that was lacking in the first. 'Be Glamorous' and latest single 'Evil Mothers' are bouncy and bold, but it's new song 'Pete The Pugilist' that really shines. It's sharp and slick, and packed with frontman Boyer's deliciously urgent yelps and guitarist Sam Davies' homages to Television mastermind Tom Verlaine's taut and angular playing. A solid end to a year and a strong start to another one.

8

■ RHIAN DALY

Patrick Wolf

Union Chapel, London
Saturday, December 21

Desolate chamber music and disco cabaret delivered with wit and gravity

"Here's another suicide song," says Patrick Wolf, moving on from a tune dedicated to poet Stephen Vickery (RIP) and turning to the tragedy of the "*gypsy stray*" 'Damaris', a lost orphan lover whose bones now lie in dank earth beaten by black rain. "This," he sneers, "is for the Catholic Church."

Behind the spindly alien disco glamourpuss has always lurked this *other* Patrick Wolf: a medieval dandy with a voice like a velvet backdrop and a mournful line in evocative and desolate chamber music. He grabs a tiny harp and, backed by a small orchestra, begins an affecting and riveting set of elegant pop heartbreak and sacrilegious disco plucked from as far back as his 2003 debut 'Lycanthropy'.

These are everyday tragedies and late-night city laments given a stately aura of import: the Morrissey-gone-goth 'Demolition', driven by laptop marimba and wrecking-ball crunches, tells of Patrick leaving behind family life at 16 "*with a T-shirt and a Blondie CD*". Later he explains that his 2010 single 'Time Of My Life' was written in the removal van that ferried his belongings away from a shattered affair. The song is still defiant disco cabaret bolstered by a cheery chorus of "*happy without you!*". But, secretly, you can hear the hookline weeping.

Inevitably, though, his wit and flamboyance won't stay quenched. When he resorts briefly to live-loop technology and computer samples, he's thwarted by a knackered laptop: "I had a dramatic introduction to this song," he says before 'Together', "but computer says no." Final London ode 'The City' finds him flinging flowers into the front row and declaring, "I could die right now and be happy." The feeling's mutual.

8

■ MARK BEAUMONT

SETLIST

▶Souvenirs
▶The Gypsy King
▶Demolition
▶Armistice
▶Ringworm (intro)/ Teignmouth
▶Together
▶The Sun Is Often Out
▶Damaris
▶Hard Times
▶Time Of My Life
▶Pigeon Song
▶Bermondsey Street
▶The Magic Position
▶The City
▶River

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PLUS GUESTS
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SUNDAY 16 FEBRUARY
LONDON
ELECTRIC BALLROOM

SWIM DEEP
PLUS GUESTS
MONDAY 17 FEBRUARY
LONDON
KOKO

Speedy Ortiz
EMPTY POOLS
TUESDAY 18 FEBRUARY
LONDON
BIRTHDAYS

WARPAINT
ALL WE ARE
TUESDAY 18 FEBRUARY
LONDON
KOKO

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PLUS GUESTS
FRIDAY 21 FEBRUARY
LONDON
SEBRIGHT ARMS

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SEBRIGHT ARMS

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Danny Brown

Rowdy Detroit rapper Danny Brown is back in the UK next month for a handful of gigs. We chat to Danny about what will happen when he plays tracks from his excellent latest album, 'Old'...

What do you make of UK crowds?
"A lot of times at home I can play something and a lot of people might come, but they're not necessarily into it for the music, they might wanna just be among the cool kids. But in the UK everyone comes for the music."

Any exciting production plans for these shows?
"Nah, a lot of people they do things like that, but they're not as good as rappers as I am, y'know? They need a lot of things to distract you! People that's paying to see me have paid to see me rap, so that's what I do."

You recently featured on a remix of Vampire Weekend's 'Step' – how did that come about?
"I've been a fan of theirs for a nice length of time now. I'm always talking about them – maybe they got wind of it! It was all done over email. I met Ezra at A-Trak's house for a Christmas party one time. We're cool!"

Could an onstage collaboration ever happen?
"There's been a lot of times that we've played the same festival. If I'm at somewhere they're playing and they wanna do it, I'm down."

▶THE DETAILS

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Wild Beasts

Following the February release of their new LP 'Present Tense', Wild Beasts play songs from their saucy and slinky four-album catalogue at a six-date run of shows. They finish up on April Fool's Day at Brixton Academy – no joke.

▶**DATES** Manchester Albert Hall (March 26), Glasgow The Arches (27), Dublin Olympia Theatre (29), Bristol O2 Academy (30), Cambridge Corn Exchange (31), London O2 Academy Brixton (April 1)
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▶**PRICE** £15–£18
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▶**FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £1.50 booking fee, except Manchester £1.65 and London £3.40

Cheatahs

Kicking off with a gig at Birthdays as part of the NME Awards Shows with Austin, Texas, Cheatahs bring their riff-heavy pop kicks to some of the UK's more intimate venues following the release of their debut album.

▶**DATES** London Birthdays (February 12), Sheffield The Harley (February 15), Brighton Prince Albert (16), Leeds Brudenell Social Club (17), Glasgow Broadcast (18), Liverpool East Village Arts Club (19)
▶**SUPPORT ACTS** Primitive Parts
▶**PRICE** £6, London £9.60
▶**ON SALE** now
▶**FROM** musicglue.com/cheetahs with £1 booking fee

Chromeo

A one-off show at the Roundhouse is your best bet for unfathomably funky, unhinged disco breaks this June. Dave 1 and P-Thugg's new album 'White Women' comes out in the spring

JENN FIVE, DAVID WALA, AMY BRAMMALL, ED MILES

▶**DATES** London Roundhouse (June 6)
▶**SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
▶**PRICE** £20
▶**ON SALE** now
▶**FROM** seetickets.com with £2 booking fee

Ella Eyre

Rudimental collaborator and BBC Sound Of 2014 runner-up Ella Eyre does her two-step meets Motown thing.

▶**DATES** London XOYO (March 12), Brighton The Haunt (13), Birmingham Temple (14), Glasgow King Tut's (16), Leeds Cockpit 2 (17), Nottingham Bodega (18), Bristol Exchange (20), Manchester Gorilla (21)
▶**SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
▶**PRICE** £8
▶**ON SALE** now
▶**FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £1–£2.20 booking fee

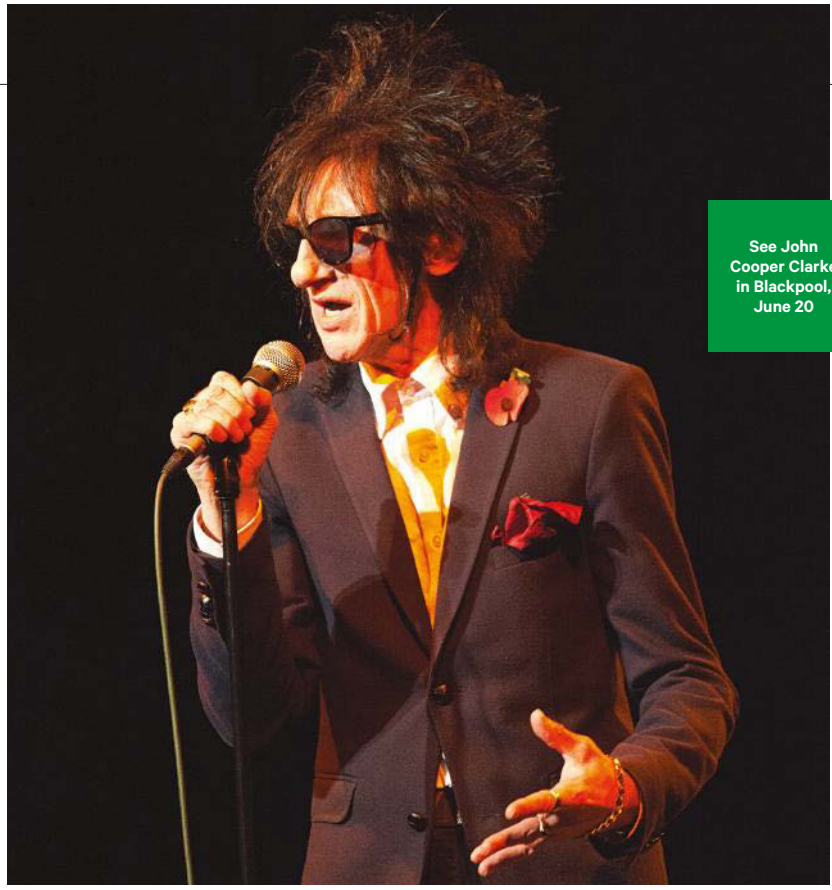
Post War Glamour Girls

Leeds' Post War Glamour Girls play a hometown show next month, followed by a Valentine's Day trip to London.

▶**DATES** Leeds Brudenell Social Club (February 13), London Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen (14)
▶**SUPPORT ACTS** Stalking Horse
▶**PRICE** Leeds £5, London £6
▶**ON SALE** now
▶**FROM** NME.COM/tickets with 50p booking fee (Leeds) or £1.25 (London)

François & The Atlas Mountains

Euro loveliness comes thick and fast from the Bristol-based Domino signings.



See John Cooper Clarke in Blackpool, June 20

▶**DATES** London Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen (March 26), Bristol The Lantern (27), Liverpool Leaf (28), Glasgow Stereo (29), Manchester The Roadhouse (30)
▶**SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
▶**PRICE** £8, London £11
▶**ON SALE** now
▶**FROM** NME.COM/tickets with 80p–£1 booking fee, London £2.65

Four Tet

With a little help from Eat Your Own Ears, Four Tet head up a second all-nighter at Brixton Academy. The last one saw back-to-back DJ sets from Four Tet and Caribou as well as appearances by Ben UFO and James Holden.

▶**DATES** London O2 Academy Brixton (March 22)
▶**SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
▶**PRICE** £5
▶**ON SALE** now
▶**FROM** seetickets.com with £2.40 booking fee

John Cooper Clarke

Alex Turner's buddy graces the faded glam of Blackpool for an evening of wit and wisdom.

▶**DATES** Blackpool Arena Winter Gardens (June 20)
▶**SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
▶**PRICE** £22
▶**ON SALE** now
▶**FROM** seetickets.com with £2.40 booking fee

Lyla Foy

Set to release her debut album 'Mirrors The Sky', dreamy low-key electro-folk singer Lyla Foy is Sub Pop's first UK-based signing in three years.

▶**DATES** Bristol The Louisiana (March 17), Nottingham The Bodega Social Club (20), Glasgow Nice N Sleazy (21), Manchester The Castle Hotel (23)
▶**SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
▶**PRICE** £8, Manchester £7
▶**ON SALE** now
▶**FROM** NME.COM/tickets with 96p–£1.35 booking fee

TOUR NEWS

Bombay Bicycle Club

The London band beef out their spring tour even further by adding a Liverpool show. After putting out their fourth album in February, they'll hit the road the following month, playing Liverpool O2 Academy on March 15.

FESTIVAL NEWS

Liverpool Psych Fest

This year's Merseyside celebration of all things fuzzy will be headed up by Goat, with Teeth Of The Sea, Zombie Zombie and Hills also making an appearance over the weekend of 26–27 September. Early bird tickets are £40.

Summer Sonic

Arctic Monkeys are set to dominate this year's festival season, and have added a headline slot at Japan's Summer Sonic in August. The band are also headlining T In The Park, Roskilde and Optimus Alive. Can Alex's quiff stand the pressure? Here's hoping.

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GOING OUT

Everything worth leaving the house for this week

Circa Waves

The Liverpool quartet have barely been together a year, but already the raw garage rock on tracks such as 'Get Away' is getting people excited. They begin 2014 with a solitary gig in Southampton.

▶**DATES** Southampton Joiners (January 15)

▶**TICKETS** £5 from NME.COM/tickets with £1.25 booking fee

Adam Green

The former Moldy Peaches member returns to the UK to begin his intimate acoustic tour. Expect tracks from his eight-album back catalogue as he kicks things off in Glasgow.

▶**DATES** Glasgow Broadcast (January 20)

▶**TICKETS** £11.50 from ticketweb.co.uk with £1.38 booking fee

Younghusband

The psych group released debut album 'Dromes' last year, and it was a triumph of motorik rhythms and stoner aura. This week they play that record's highlights in their natural habitat of east London.

▶**DATES** London Shacklewell Arms (January 21)

▶**TICKETS** £6 from NME.COM/tickets with £1 booking fee

Beaty Heart

The south London group will unleash their debut album 'Mixed Blessings' this May. Grab a sneak preview at Camden venue KOKO.

▶**DATES** London KOKO (January 17)

▶**TICKETS** £5 from ticketweb.co.uk with 95p booking fee

Deer Tick

Frontman John McCauley originally started Deer Tick as a solo project in 2004, and released cassettes and CD-Rs of his bluesy indie-rock for three years. The project gradually grew into a full band, and the current line-up now includes Christopher Dale Ryan, Dennis Ryan, Ian O'Neil and Rob Crowell. Last year they released fifth album 'Negativity', inspired by McCauley's struggles with substance abuse and other personal issues. They tour that record this week and next.

▶**DATES** Belfast Black Box (January 17), Glasgow Broadcast (18), Manchester Deaf Institute (19), Leeds Brudenell Social Club (21)

▶**TICKETS** Manchester £11.50, Glasgow £10 both from NME.COM/tickets with £1–£1.38 booking fee; Belfast £11 from openhousefestival.com; Glasgow £12.50 from ticketweb.co.uk with £1.50 booking fee

God Damn

God Damn are from Birmingham, the birthplace of UK metal, and put their own twist on their area's heritage by adding touches of grunge and garage rock to their weighty riffs. Last year they released the 'Heavy Money' EP and gained a reputation for their manic and messy live shows. Check them out in Leicester and Stoke.

▶**DATES** Leicester Cookie Jar (January 16), Stoke Sugarmill (17)

FIVE TO SEE FOR FREE

Thrills don't come cheaper than this

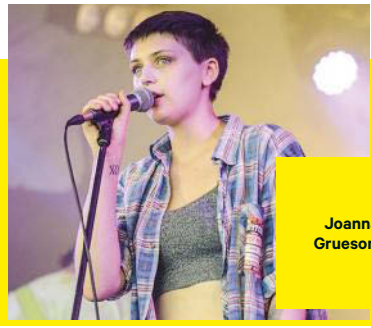
1. James Vincent McMorrow
Rough Trade East, London
Irish songwriter plugs new album.
▶Jan 15, 7pm

2. Girl Band
Green Door Store, Brighton
The noise-rock band bring riffs to the south-east.
▶Jan 15, 7pm

3. Tom The Lion
Rough Trade West, London
Folky Londoner plays songs from debut LP 'Sleep'.
▶Jan 18, 5pm

4. Joanna Gruesome
Old Blue Last, London
Cardiff group plug debut album 'Weird Sister'.
▶Jan 20, 8pm

5. Kaleida
The Finsbury, London
Clever dancefloor-driven electro-pop duo.
▶Jan 21, 7pm



Joanna Gruesome

Adam Green

▶**TICKETS** Leicester £5; Stoke £4 from NME.COM/tickets with 50p–£1 booking fee

Darlia

Blackpool trio Darlia have been compared to the likes of Nirvana and Fugazi, so go and see what all the fuss is about.

▶**DATES** Brighton Hope (January 17), Manchester Sound Control (21)

▶**TICKETS** Brighton £7 from ticketmaster.co.uk with £1.25 booking fee; Manchester £6.50 from NME.COM/tickets with £1 booking fee

Jessica Pratt

Fragile folk sounds from this San Francisco-based acoustic singer-songwriter. You'll hear songs from her self-titled debut album, which sounds like it was scooped straight from the 1970s.

▶**DATES** Manchester Gullivers (January 15), London Cafe Oto (16), Bristol The Cube (17)

▶**TICKETS** £8 with 80p booking fee from NME.COM/tickets

Deaf Club

Shoegazey sorts Deaf Club head up a new band bill alongside Storms and Stats as part of Artrocker's seven-day long New Blood Festival taking place in Hoxton Square throughout the month.

▶**DATES** London Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen (January 15)

▶**TICKETS** £6.25 with £2.81 booking fee from tickets.ents24.com

ANDY HUGHES, JENN FIVE, GETTY

Watch The Boss in part two of the BBC Four American classic rock doc on January 17

STAYING IN

The best music on TV, radio and online this week

Bruce Springsteen

Born To Be Wild: The Golden Age Of American Rock – School's Out

The Boss is one of a host of '70s guitar-wielding Stateside icons to feature in the second episode of the BBC's new classic rock doc. Chats about stadium-sized decadence as well as impressive live footage comes from Fleetwood Mac, the Eagles and Tom Petty.

▶**WATCH** BBC4, 9pm, Jan 17

Blondie
Gideon Coe

Listen in to the show for some killer recordings of the divine Debbie Harry and New York's slickest pop punks live in concert, as well as a bunch of archive jams from Richard D James, aka Aphex Twin, and a blast of old-school pop from Terry Hall's post-Specials outfit Fun Boy Three.

▶**LISTEN** BBC 6Music, 9pm, Jan 15

Albert Hammond Jr
Liz Kershaw

The recently hitched guitarist chats about his latest solo effort, the 'AHJ' EP, in the 6Music studio. Be sure to tune in to see if he gives away any juicy Strokes gossip.

▶**LISTEN** BBC 6Music, 1pm, Jan 18

Django Django
Tom Ravenscroft

Following a jaunt to Mali, Dave Maclean of Django Django swings by the studio to offer up a guest mix comprising Afrobeat and Malian sounds. Part of 6Music's weekend celebration of African music.

▶**LISTEN** BBC 6Music, 7pm, Jan 17

Radiohead
Meeting People Is Easy

This classic tour documentary follows Thom Yorke and the band as they hit the road with their acclaimed 1997 album 'OK Computer', and go ever so slightly mad in the process.

▶**WATCH** Sky Arts, 7.20pm, Jan 21

Thom Yorke

Jungle
Danielle Perry

NME Radar stars Jungle grace XFM's Evening Show with their mysterious presence, and will play a live track on both Wednesday and Thursday.

▶**LISTEN** Xfm, 7pm, Jan 15-16

Girls

Lena Dunham's award-winning Brooklyn-based comedy returns for its third season with a double bill. Keep your eyes peeled for a cameo from Kim Gordon at some point in the new series, and your ears open for brand new tracks from Jenny Lewis as well as a joint from Beck's forthcoming new album, 'Morning Phase'.

▶**WATCH** Sky Atlantic, 10pm, Jan 20

100 ALBUMS FOR 2014

Kasabian

Kicking off our rundown of the most exciting music due out this year, Kasabian talk us through their "dangerous" new album

PHOTOS BY ED MILES

In a large room with bare, grey walls inside a massive house just outside Leicester, Tom Meighan cannot contain how thrilled he is about the album Kasabian have almost finished making. "This is the most excited I've ever been," he says. "The album is a real 'fuck you' to anyone who ever dares criticise or snarl at us, and say we can't do music like this. It's a real fucking 'up yours'. There are a lot of bands who try to do this kind of music but fail because they've got no songs. The process starts simple. Serge gets a demo and then we build on it, and then he mutates it with rocket fuel and liquid nitrogen and it's crisp and it's crack and it's smack. It's a dangerous, dangerous, dangerous, dangerous drug we've created. I can't get my head round it. It's rock'n'roll, it's got the rawness and it's edgy, but we've gone back to electronica and we've gone beyond leftfield. What else can we do? It's a silver bullet, mate. It's fantastic. This is beyond anything we've ever done. We've gone hard, but this is beyond hard. This is hardcore. We want to put it out there and let people stew on it. Let them worry about it. Then tour the motherfucking hell out of it." ↣

Serge Pizzorno in his home studio with Tom Meighan (right), January 6, 2014

Serge and Tom take a turn around the former's garden in Leicestershire

Due in June, Kasabian's fifth album follows 2011's 'Velociraptor!', an album that made them big enough to headline Reading & Leeds in 2012 and London's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in 2013. All 13 songs, very deliberately, will have a one-word title, but the album title is currently a secret because, says the band's creative mastermind Serge Pizzorno, sitting next to Meighan, "of the way we're gonna launch it". Most of the record – aside from some drum and vocal parts laid down in State Of The Ark studios in London – was put together here in Pizzorno's home studio. Inside, among the mixing desks and instruments, is a copy of *Scootering* magazine, a bunch of feathers, an Italian flag, a Kasabian flag and a plaque that says 'The Sergery'. Pizzorno pulls out his iPod to play four of the new songs: 'Treat', 'Ezz-Eh', 'Explodes', plus album opener and likely first single 'Bumblebee'. According to Pizzorno the songs on the album fall into three categories: "bangers, mystical and campfire". Today is all about the first two.

As the tunes play, Pizzorno and Meighan glance at each other, dance, and whisper about little things they've noticed: things Pizzorno has added since the last time Meighan heard them a month ago, things that need to be tweaked. At one point during the long and euphoric 'Treat', on which Tom and Serge share vocals, they make eye contact and giggle. Pizzorno explains: "There's a bit where the music drops, and it just says the word 'Leicester'. It's a proper old-school hip-hop drop, and it's kind of wrong but amazing at the same time. A little nod."

This is not the only nod to the band's hometown. Named for the Leicester dialect, 'Ezz-Eh' – a heavy electro banger – has a chorus that goes: "*Horsemeat in the burgers, people commit murders/Everyone's on bugle, we're being watched by Google*". Of which Meighan says: "It's a comic. It's cartoonish. It's punk. We've never done anything like it. It's trashy. It's dirty. It's Leicester." Pizzorno expands: "It's more a conversation that me and Tom might have at six in the morning. Ridiculous rants when you think you're making the most amazing points, and the next morning you're like... what?"

"The new album is a real 'fuck you' to anyone who dares criticise us" Tom Meighan

There are more self-referential lyrics in 'Explodes', a track full of wubs and thuds and moments that vaguely recall the take-a-breather bits of The Prodigy's 'The Fat Of The Land'. Says Pizzorno: "It's about writing, really. Going to those depths. Anyone who's worked as hard as us to create something, you get to a point where you don't know who you are any more and you can literally feel your fucking head's gonna cave in. But that's the point – you only get good art when you put yourself through the mangle." I suggest there's a bit of Pet Shop Boys synth action in the song. He winces and says: "It's more Frankie Knuckles. Kind of like acid house Chicago '91. A nod back to growing up. Keith [Richards] always goes on about Chuck Berry and John Lee Hooker, and that's where he came from. We came from Slipmatt and Top Buzz. So doing a tune like this is like us doing a blues track with a slide, like the Stones used to."

Then there's 'Bumblebee', the biggest of them all. It was the first track Pizzorno had for the album, having come up with the melody after going to Damon Albarn's Africa Express at Granary Square in London in September 2012. It's about Kasabian's connection with their fans.

"I didn't have a name and my little boy Ennio called it 'Busy Bee'," says Pizzorno. "I thought he said 'bumblebee' and thought, 'That's an amazing title.' Humans can't exist without bumblebees, and the song's about the fans and about us joining together and reaching a higher state with them – our fans are our bumblebees. Without them we're fucked. Without them pollinating the flowers, we're done."

It gets Meighan going too: "'Bumblebee' starts it all for me. When that comes in it's like... 'We're back.' Live, it will be amazing when it kicks in. It has a Black Sabbath thing as well. They were from the Midlands and so are we. It's a very Midlands album. It sounds like we're from the middle of England." Again, Pizzorno expands: "But it's got just as much in common with the Beastie Boys and Flying Lotus."

Back in the house, after Meighan has scarpered in a taxi, Pizzorno elaborates on all the musicians whose ideas, philosophies and sounds he's been tapping into for this album. Italian composer Ennio Morricone comes up a lot, a man Pizzorno loves so much he named his son after him. There's also The Prodigy, The Chemical Brothers, Madlib, Lee 'Scratch' ↣

The album so far

Treat
Tom: "'Treat', more than anything, is about looking in the mirror at your bad self. With me and Serge there's kind of a good side of us and an evil side of us. He's my evil twin and I'm his evil twin, it's true. It's the flip of a coin, two sides, two faces."

Explodes
Serge: "It's about putting pen to paper and creating something."

Ezz-Eh
Serge: "The lyrics are just slogans. '*The wrong men have the power, turning my milk sour*'. And '*I'm coping with disorders*'. I like that one. We've all got fucking disorders. My one is that if I don't know where the remote control for the TV is, I freak out."

SPS
Tom: "It's a song about me, and Sergio sings it. It's beautiful, a compliment, but the fucker is I've gotta write one in return now."

Bumblebee
Serge: "This will probably be the song that opens the live shows. The video would have to involve a moshpit, shot beautifully."

Kid
Serge: "There's an artist, Carrie Reichardt, who does a series of works called Mad In England – I've got one – and she's incredible. I just thought Mad In England was an amazing thing to come up with. I can imagine this song inspiring people."

Glass
Serge: "This comes from the idea that if the people joined as a collective we could do so much damage. It's like when they blocked the petrol stations and we didn't have petrol for three days. There's power in that."

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for the facts **drinkaware.co.uk**

Perry, Beak, Frankie Knuckles, Slipmatt, Top Buzz, John Carpenter, Led Zeppelin, Nirvana, Chase & Status, Tangerine Dream, Joe Strummer, George Harrison, Quakers and Beck, whose 'Song Reader' idea impressed him so much when he heard about it on the radio he had to pull over in his car and "take a minute". He says: "I was like, 'Fucking hell, that's the greatest thing I've ever heard'. In this day and age to just go, 'You have to play it yourself,' and never release it so no-one knows what it sounds like. That is so good."

He describes Beck's idea as "a move", a phrase he uses a lot when talking about other musicians' bold artistic decisions. The one that affected his approach for this album is Kanye West's 'Yeezus'. "The moves he pulled, for the person he is and how mainstream he is, you have to take your hat off," he says. "In rock music I don't think anyone's pulled that move. Not to sound like Kanye, but to go 'Fuck it'. I wanted to do the same. I want people to listen to a rock band who play guitars, but are not just a rock band. The sound of the record was already in place, but 'Yeezus' reinforced the need for me to pull moves, for songs to be seven minutes and stop in the middle and change, for synths to be too loud, for lyrics to be fucking throwdowns. We're a big band and there's so much you can do. You don't want to just stand still."

Pizzorno has also got love for Death Grips. "They're just... uncompromising. They do what they want and just put shit out. It's a very difficult listen but you can't deny it. It's like techno punk, it's phenomenal. That 'Guillotine' song is so good – you can clear a room with it. There's a band called Toy, and they came in our dressing room and were dropping Sonic Youth and all the obvious tunes, and I was sitting there and I thought, 'I'll put a tune on', and I put Death Grips on and it cleared the room. They were all fucking frightened of it. And I thought, 'That's it.'"

Kasabian on...

...New bands

Serge: "Maybe what's wrong with a lot of young bands now is they're too considered. They don't want to say shit that might offend people or not read correctly. We didn't care. We did all our early interviews off our heads."

...Tom and Serge's relationship

Serge: "Tom and my missus are the only people I'll ever listen to in the world. If Tom comes up and is like, 'I need to talk to ya', I'm like, 'Over here, let's go.' Anyone else I'm like that: 'In a bit, mate'. That's the level."
Tom: "We need time apart, because when we get back together again it's lovely. I could easily come round his Friday, right, and be like 'You alright, Serge? Let's have a party in that room and have a chat and catch up.'"

...Misconceptions

Tom: "The biggest one is that we're an indie band. That we belong in that same box as Shed Seven and The Bluetones and fucking Supergrass. We're a rock'n'roll band, we're fusion, simple as that. I hate that word 'indie'. We're future rock'n'roll."

...Serge's experimental music

Serge: "There's music I've got that could never go onto a Kasabian record, like 20-minute instrumental krautrock electronic head music. But that's for another time and place. All my tunes start as weird little synth moments and I build them into songs. If I didn't build them they'd be weird synthy bits. I might do it after the record, when everyone knows what it sounds like. I might release the offcuts."

...Twitter

Serge: "We're sort of the last band to not have to do what bands have to do now. I don't have Twitter. Does it sell more albums? More tickets? OK, you have 100,000,000 views on YouTube, but can you sell out the 02? Probably not."

...Kasabian's power

Serge: "The power we have is getting people together, and from there they'll take it where it needs to go. Because I don't know any answers. I'm not qualified to tell anyone anything. But I'd like to think we bring enough people together for things to happen."

"We're a big band – and there's so much we can do" Serge Pizzorno

This doesn't mean Kasabian's new album is full of brutal noise. Pizzorno wants to push the band to places they've never been, but he still knows they need huge, festival-sized anthems, especially if the rumoured headline slot at this year's Glastonbury is true. "I'm not an idiot. We're fully aware of what we are and what we mean to people. We are about huge, epic tunes and big choruses and we're proud of that. We want 50 or 60,000 people to come and have an incredible night. But I also want to squeeze in that other side of things so people can go, 'Wow, there's so much going on.'" And not just musically. Three songs on the album, none of them played today, cover topics lurking deep inside Pizzorno's brain. The first, 'Kid', is inspired by the London-based artist Carrie Reichardt and her Mad In England mosaics. Says Pizzorno: "They're amazing. Bang, lose the 'E', gone, that's perfect. The first verse is elders pinning you down, the second verse is the comeback, and the chorus is: '*All the kids will say we'll live to fight another day*'. It's so huge, an epic tune." The second song, 'Glass', is about what would happen "if you stopped and thought about how much power we've got". He explains: "With the whole Starbucks tax-evasion thing, if we all got together and said, 'Right, no-one go to Starbucks,' it would only take a week to destroy a company."

The third, album closer 'SPS' (short for 'Scissor Paper Stone'), was written for and about Tom. Pizzorno says: "You write what you experience. It's difficult to find subjects when your life goes... y'know. But me and Tom so often find ourselves on the bus at seven or eight in the morning, and it's about having a soundtrack for that moment when you go, 'Fuck, it'd be amazing if there was a song about this.' Everyone's had it when you go out and you're the last two and you go, 'Fuck, I've really got to go to bed,' and then you go, 'One more tune.' It's about the game of who can stay up."

All this is Pizzorno creating what he calls "future rock'n'roll". "I bang on about it all the time," he says. "There's incredible electronic music being made, and incredible rock music being made. No-one's combined the two. Yet. And this is the closest I've got."

Which leaves it to Tom to lay down the gauntlet with a comment he made earlier, while failing to contain his excitement: "I'm worried for every other band." ■ TOM HOWARD

▶THE DETAILS

- ▶**TITLE** TBC
- ▶**RELEASE DATE** June
- ▶**PRODUCER** Serge Pizzorno
- ▶**RECORDED** State Of The Ark, London; The Sergery, Leicester
- ▶**TRACKS INCLUDE** See box, page 38
- ▶**SERGE SAYS** "I couldn't have made this album at the beginning. I needed to maker four albums before this record, y'know. It's distilled Kasabian. It's what we are in essence."

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The Horrors

The experimentalists' fourth album may still be a much-delayed "work in progress" but it's shaping up to be their most potent work yet

"We want to get the album out for May or something like that... We're not in a rush or anything... We're going to take our time and make sure it's just right. So, this year at some point..." Sound familiar? It should do: that was The Horrors' Tom Cowan, talking about the band's upcoming fourth album in our Albums of *2013* preview, a whole 12 months ago. In the interim, we've heard barely a note of new music from The Horrors beyond the electro-psych sprawl of 'Elixir Spring', which was aired on last summer's festival circuit, and which bassist Rhys Webb warns is only one small part of "a much larger world of sound". So is the album finally, no-turning-back, 100 per cent finished? "It's not *absolutely* finished," says Rhys, sheepishly. "In fact, we're mixing it right now (at Toast Studios in west London). But we're in the final stages. The release date is looking like it's going to be April."

The Horrors have never been the sort of band to walk into a studio, bash out a few takes and retire to the pub while someone else polishes it up. Their songs are not written on acoustic guitars at the back of the tourbus, instead taking shape over a long process of trial, error and experimentation at their laboratory-style recording facility in east London. As Webb explains, "The record is always a work in progress, it's always in a place where the songs can evolve."

And they have. When the band played Glastonbury back in June, they had 10 tracks in the can, and the record was more or less done. By the end of the festival season, however, the creative bug bit again, so they ventured back to the studio."Because we knew the record would be out in 2014, and since we had the luxury of time, we wrote some new ones and we've been working on those since September," says Webb. "It's cool, because we'd never really had the luxury of time before: any record we've worked on in the past, we've been writing and recording right up until the last minute." And the record company weren't hopping mad at you? "It didn't cause any real problems, to be honest. At one point we were quite excited about having the album out in 2013, but that changed when we realised we were going to be at festivals most weekends. We found ourselves breaking down and packing away the stuff that we were working with every weekend and it just wasn't working. It didn't cause any turmoil as far as deadlines went. It didn't affect anything."

But that's not entirely accurate: the current iteration of the album is a different beast from the one they were gearing up to release last

Faris Badwan at Kensaltown Recording Studios in London, December 5, 2013

Joe Spurgeon, Faris and Rhys Webb (with the studio dog, Floyd) make plans for 2014

"It's heavier, weirder, wilder and perhaps more beautiful than anything we've ever done before"
Rhys Webb

year, with the three newer songs that made the cut coming "from a slightly different place" to the others. 'Elixir Spring' was at one point reckoned to be the standout track (that's why it was included in their recent setlists), but now, explains Webb, "that's all changed, and it's a completely different song".

Other titles doing the rounds last summer included 'Jealous Sun', 'Luminous' and 'First Day Of Spring' (which they played live once, at Truck Festival). Webb confirms that 'Luminous' has since been dropped in favour of one of the new tunes, and that many of the songs are liable to be renamed anyway. "The names always come last for us, because the songs are always changing," he explains. "Some of the songs we wrote and were playing at the beginning of the year sound completely different now. The thing is, music is always quite a visual experience for us, and until it's finally mixed, it feels like we haven't even seen the final picture ourselves."

He is, however, quick to dispel the suggestion that the band have been channelling '70s space-rock titans Hawkwind, an off-the-cuff remark made by guitarist Joshua Hayward way back in August 2012 that, Webb says, "has come back to haunt us, because that's ended up not being the case at all. One of the conversations we had after the last record was about moving in a slightly heavier direction, and I think that's happened in a way, but not in the sense that people would expect: it's not so much about heavier guitars as a heavier potency. It's not heavy in the sort of rocking way that referencing Hawkwind might suggest – although they are an amazing band!"

So, what does the record sound like? Webb is reluctant to go into the finer details before he hears the finished thing for himself, but he does promise that it's "moved in a more electronic direction from 'Skying'. We've been experimenting with sound processing, sequencers and rhythm. We want to make music you can dance to, music that elevates. It feels like the next step for us. We don't want it to just be a collection of songs, but an experience for the listener, something for them to feel involved in. I'd say it's heavier, weirder, wilder and perhaps more beautiful than anything we've ever done before."

While the band are playing their cards close to their chest, Webb does let slip that "we're leaving the studio every night with a mix in our pocket and listening to it when we get home, and I think everyone feels the most excited about the record at this stage than we ever have before. That's a pretty nice place to be."

■ BARRY NICOLSON

▶THE DETAILS

▶**TITLE** TBC
▶**RELEASE DATE** April
▶**LABEL** XL Recordings
▶**PRODUCERS** The Horrors and Craig Silvey
▶**RECORDED** The Horrors' studio in east London
▶**TRACKS INCLUDE** Elixir Spring, First Day Of Spring, Jealous Sun, Falling Star, So Now You Know
▶**RHYS WEBB SAYS** "We've always been about evolving and trying to get better. This record is no different."

JENN FIVE

Lily Allen in the studio, and (right) the controversial 'Hard Out Here' video

Lily Allen

She's put the Azealia Banks Twitter beef and 'Hard Out Here' controversy behind her. But Lily reckons her new album will ruffle a few feathers too

In 2009, Lily Allen announced that she had no plans to renew her record deal, and that she may never record another album at all. But, as 2013 drew to a close, 'Somewhere Only We Know' was still high up in the UK singles chart and feminist anthem 'Hard Out Here' was still provoking debate and discussion. Now, her as yet untitled third album is, she says over the phone, "pretty much there – I've got 20 tracks and I'd be happy for them all to go on the record, so it's just about cutting it down and deciding which ones fit alongside each other".

So, what changed? "Lots of things," she says. "I'd always wanted to have children and be settled – that was kind of my dream. And to be honest, I thought I would be much better at it! As much as I love my children – and I love them more than anything in the world – I'm just not the type of person who's well suited to sitting around all day and playing with toys. So eventually I came to the realisation that I needed to do something else with my daytimes, and it just seemed abundantly clear that I don't know how to do anything else except sit in a studio and write songs. So I made another album."

Accordingly, motherhood – and the discovery of "the emotional capacity to love something so much" – is one of the record's big themes, along with "a lot of personal observations, songs about myself and my family, my kids, my relationship with my husband, friends and ex-friends." Contrary to reports, however, there's nothing on the album directly addressing her Twitter spat with Azealia Banks (who said Lily's husband Sam Cooper "looks like a thumb"), though that interaction "did ignite some sort of juvenile spark or creative flow in me. There's nothing particularly inspired by her, it just woke up a very teenage emotion – angst, maybe – that I found quite useful in making the record."

While she's keen to put the beef with Azealia to bed, a new Lily Allen record is never without its controversies. A politically motivated number called 'Chipping Norton' – named for the Oxfordshire town where David Cameron, Jeremy Clarkson and Rebekah Brooks all reside – may not make the final cut, but 'Hard Out Here' proved that Lily still knows how to get us talking. Even with the new album's more domestic focus, she still expects a few of the songs to ruffle feathers, if only because "when you put something out there, people want to write about it – they want the hits, they want American Apparel to give them money to advertise on their blog. So yeah, I'm sure people will find things to get angry about on the record."

Lily's brush with the professionally offended gave her a reminder that the five-year gap between 'It's Not Me, It's You' and the new album equates to a long time in music.

"I didn't realise until I released 'Hard Out Here' that comment had become such a massive thing. Where I live I don't have a good internet connection, so I really just use it for emails. But after it came out, I had a look at what people had to say, and the sheer amount of blogs that were written on it surprised me. I'm not from the school of 'any publicity is good publicity', but I think most people could see that song wasn't coming from a nasty place. I wasn't even really trying to make a point, I was just trying to say what I thought about something."

Musically, her comeback single was widely assumed to be a pastiche of modern pop's love of Auto-Tune and one-size-fits-all syntheticity, but she insists that wasn't her intention. "It really isn't meant to be ironic at all, I just liked the way it sounds," she explains. She describes the rest of the album as being "more modern-sounding than my previous ones have been. The last couple looked to the past for their influences, whether it was ska or reggae or whatever, but this one doesn't do that at all. There's one that has quite a country-ish, Primal Scream-y vibe to it – but that's the extent of it."

And why the switch back to Lily Allen from your married name, Lily Rose Cooper?

"My record company wouldn't back Lily Rose Cooper!" she laughs. "Sadly, in this day and age, I still need their support. They're the bank manager, and if they don't get their money out, then I'm not going to get anywhere. I understand that my name is quite a big one, but it's about picking your battles..."

She may have given that skirmish a swerve, but expect to find her wading into the cultural fray in her own inimitable way over the next 12 months.

■ BARRY NICOLSON

"I don't know how to do anything except sit in a studio and write songs"
Lily Allen

▶THE DETAILS

▶**TITLE** TBC
▶**RELEASE DATE** Spring 2014
▶**LABEL** Warner Bros
▶**PRODUCERS** Greg Kurstin, Kid Harpoon, DJ Dahi
▶**RECORDED** Lily Allen's home, Greg Kurstin's Echo studio, LA
▶**TRACKS INCLUDE** Some People, Chipping Norton, Close Your Eyes, Taking Over
▶**LILY ALLEN SAYS** "I could tell you what each track sounds like, but I couldn't really sum it up as a whole. The album is really quite diverse, musically."

Interpol

The New Yorkers went on an indefinite hiatus after their 2010 album 'Interpol'. But now they're back with album five and a new sense of urgency

At the end of the touring cycle for their last album, 2010's 'Interpol', drummer Sam Fogarino suggested that the sharply attired New Yorkers were in need of a "big break – we need to recoup and go on a proper hiatus". It sounded like the death knell for a band who seemed to have reached a plateau after losing their most recognisable member (vampiric bassist Carlos Dengler, who quit the band shortly after the recording of 'Interpol') and who had suffered the first underwhelming critical and commercial returns of their career. Guitarist Daniel Kessler, however, disputes that notion.

"There was never any sense that we'd come to a breaking point or anything," he says over the phone from New York, during the recording of Interpol's fifth, as yet untitled LP. "But if you play 200 shows and tour as hard as we did, you need time to get back to other elements of life, and start thinking about new songs."

When that tour ended, the three remaining members of the band went their separate ways for a while. Frontman Paul Banks released a couple of solo albums and a bewildering hip-hop mixtape (we're assured that there is "definitely no rapping" on the new record). Kessler and Fogarino launched their own respective side-projects, Big Noble and Empty Mansions. This, Kessler says, was important: "If you just keep doing the same thing, it starts to feel like a job. Doing other stuff makes you really hungry to get back to Interpol."

It took the trio until February last year to reconvene, however, whereupon their first writing session proved particularly fruitful, yielding a number of songs that have been earmarked for the new album's final tracklisting. Nevertheless, the group's changed circumstances took a certain amount of getting used to. First, there was the issue of becoming a three-piece, which Kessler says "most definitely did feel strange". Next, there was the geographical distance between the band members, which meant their time together was more coordinated and more intensive than ever before. "We'd fix it so that we had two weeks in New York once a month, every month, without a day off," he explains. "I didn't know if that would be a fruitful process or a frustrating one, but it turned out great. It felt like the three of us had this new, natural energy together."

"It turned out great. The three of us had this new, natural energy together" Daniel Kessler

Still, some things remain the same. When asked to describe the new songs, Kessler umms and ahhhs for a while, before saying that "a few of them maybe sound a little more beat-up than the last record, but you know, it sounds like us. It sounds like an Interpol record." Similarly, the band's recording process remains as measured and precise as their sound, which the guitarist says negates the need for an outside producer. "We write all of our songs before entering the studio," he says, "so when we get there, they already have a definite form – to the extent that we could probably go out and play them at a show before we even started recording them. If you want a producer who has a specific sound, who's going to shape your record to fit a vision they have, then it makes sense to work with one. But for us we

Daniel Kessler and Paul Banks at Atomic Sound Studios, New York, December 2013

felt like we had enough ideas of our own. We know what we want to capture."

At this stage, the band have "something like 14 songs in contention, which is actually pretty good for us! We're not the sort of band who'll write 27 songs then narrow them down." Having gone through the archives for 2012's 10th anniversary re-release of debut album 'Turn On The Bright Lights', however, Kessler is now firmly focused on the band's future. "We're never lacking ideas or inspiration," he insists. "There's always something new to be said, and if you don't have something new to say, that's when you should take a break. We got back together because we felt like some of these songs had a certain urgency. It feels new again." ■

BARRY NICOLSON

▶THE DETAILS

▶**TITLE** TBC
▶**RELEASE DATE** Summer
▶**LABEL** Co-Op (UK/Europe); Matador (USA)
▶**PRODUCERS** Interpol
▶**RECORDED** Electric Lady Studios, Manhattan; Atomic Sound Studios, Brooklyn
▶**DANIEL KESSLER SAYS** "I think we feel very free in what we're able to do right now. The songs have a chemistry together."

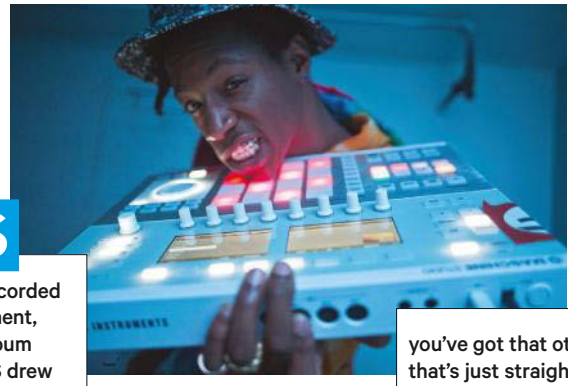
GUY EPPEL, ED MILES, DEE FROSTED

Temples

Temples frontman James Bagshaw took the idea of taking work home to its extreme when recording his band's debut album, 'Sun Structures'. The whole thing was recorded in his mum's spare room in Kettering, and the time spent in a cramped box room seems to have resulted in cabin fever. "If you had a landscape of this beautiful scene and you did it in charcoal and then you did it in oils, it'd be a whole different thing," begins Bagshaw, asked about the vision behind the album. "You have this scene, which is the song, and the way you fill it in with the production colours it. It's painting by numbers – but with no numbers."

The spacey 'Sun Structures' aligns itself with psychedelic '60s pop and '70s glam rock – and the kind of cosmic lyric-writing that's seldom been heard since those times. "There's a lot of references to spirituality and mythology," says bassist Tom Warmsley, "but it's more about the general atmosphere and the feelings evoked in the music – that's the most important thing. We just want to be bold and venture into all the areas we want to venture into."

■ LISA WRIGHT
▶**TITLE** 'Sun Structures'
▶**RELEASE DATE** February 10
▶**LABEL** Heavenly



Joey Bada$$

It may have been recorded in a Brooklyn basement, but for his debut album rapper Joey Bada$$ drew inspiration from his global travels. With a mic in his pocket and studio kit in his suitcase, he ventured as far as Norway, "where the sun never really goes down", before knuckling down to make 'B4.Da.$$', a play on his recording name and the phrase 'before the money'.

Inspired by Louis Armstrong and Miles Davis, the resulting album has Joey's signature jazzy, boom-bap sounds and a focus on instrumentation over sampling, but his style has evolved since his 'Summer Knights' EP and numerous mixtapes. "The walk that I'm taking you down is very different," he says, speaking from Perth, Australia. "My walk to this life, to fame, to peace, to my spirituality and enlightenment. I guess it's quite confessional but then you've got that other side that's just straight badass, all up in your face."

Coy about guests – though you can safely assume there'll be members of the Beast Coast crew – he reveals producers include Harry Fraud and The Alchemist. "It's that futuristic rap, it's that next gen. It's that piff, that crack. It's all of the above."

■ LUCY JONES
▶**TITLE** 'B4.Da.$$'
▶**RELEASE DATE** Summer
▶**LABEL** Cinematic Music Group/Relentless

Everything Everything

After the troubled 'Arc', the band make a swift return to the studio – inspired by the sound of chain-gang blues

When Jonathan Higgs picks up the phone one evening in December, he's just hit pause on another vocal take for Everything Everything's next record. Less than 11 months after the release of their second album, Jonathan, Jeremy Pritchard, Mikey Spearman and Alex Robertshaw are spending the run-up to Christmas in a tiny Welsh studio trying to remedy the discomfort they now feel with the "slow and quite morbid" 'Arc' by working more spontaneously. "Nobody likes a long wait," Jonathan says. "We want to be more instinctive – do it straight from the top of our domes."

Manic Street Preachers

Last year, the Manics returned with the largely acoustic 'Rewind The Film', a nostalgic record with guest vocals from Lucy Rose, Richard Hawley and Cate Le Bon. This year, they release 'Futurology', a record with a more aggressive sound and a new cast of guests including Scritti Politti's Green Gartside and Super Furry Animals' Cian Ciaran. "It's quite intense but synthetic as well," bassist Nicky Wire told *NME* last summer.

Singer James Dean Bradfield, meanwhile, has explained that the album is in thrall to Europe both sonically and lyrically, with krautrock influences at play in the "spikier and shinier" collection of tunes and track titles such as 'Europe (Dreaming A City)' and 'Europa Geht Durch Mich'. The latter, which translates as 'Europe Passes Through Me', is a duet with German actress Nina Hoss. "Lyrically, it's got a European fascination," says Bradfield. "The landscape of Europe, the malaise of Europe, the malaise of us Brits not feeling part of it. But don't worry – we're not talking like the Tories. There's not a song where we opt out of Europe!"

■ LEONIE COOPER
▶TITLE 'Futurology'
▶RELEASE DATE May
▶LABEL Columbia

The Men

The Brooklyn quintet's conversion from abrasive noise-punks to air-punching classic rockers continues with the release of 'Tomorrow's Hits', their fifth album since 2010. It's out in the first week of March, as was 2013's 'New Moon' and 2012's 'Open Your Heart'. "If it was up to us it would have come out much earlier," says singer and guitarist Mark Perro. "The label wanted to space things out a little."

'Tomorrow's Hits' found The Men recording in a decent studio for the first time – "every other album we've done has been in ramshackle studios or practice spaces" – but lest you fear this means self-indulgent rock piggery, understand they did the whole thing in two days. In another first for the band, 'Another Night' and 'Pearly Gates' feature a horn section. "They played live along with us and were out of there in about two hours," Perro recalls. The result sounds like an unearthed 1970s heartland rock gem, and with eight songs in 37 minutes, it was created with vinyl listening in mind. Same again in March 2015, then? Mark isn't so sure: "I don't know when or where or how or even if there'll be a next one." ■ NOEL GARDNER
▶TITLE 'Tomorrow's Hits'
▶RELEASE DATE March 3
▶LABEL Sacred Bones

EMA

Following the success of 2011's tortured 'Past Life Martyred Saints', Erika M Anderson found herself grappling with a sense of disconnection between her real self and the one taking form online. Burnt out from touring and "freaked out" by the internet's gaze, the South Dakota guitarist retired to Portland to pour her ambivalence into 'The Future's Void', an album inspired by Nine Inch Nails demos, the heavier end of K Records' back catalogue and William Gibson's 1984 cult cyberpunk novel *Neuromancer*. "It's the sound of resistance to digital commodification," says Anderson.

A bank of analogue synths and booming v-drums fill 'The Future's Void', but Anderson says she was keen to use first-take recordings and snatches of off-the-cuff audio to maintain a sense of spontaneity. "I gravitate towards hooks and melodies and in some ways the structure of these songs [are my] poppiest yet. The harsh noise and production strikes a balance with that to keep them from being advertisements." ■ CHARLOTTE RICHARDSON ANDREWS
▶TITLE 'The Future's Void'
▶RELEASE DATE Spring
▶LABEL Matador/ City Slang

Everything Everything at Giant Wafer studios in mid Wales, December 2013

The Manchester four-piece over-thought "every possible element" of 'Arc', he says now, wringing life from the songs by playing them too much and mistrusting simplicity, even second-guessing the obvious singles. They thought 'Duet' and 'Don't Try' – intentionally written to reach more people – were "dead certs", but it turns out fans wanted the "weirdness" of 'Cough Cough' and 'Kemosabe'. That kind of song came easiest to them, but critics calling them 'quirky' put them off their strongest suit. "The success of 'Kemosabe' was actually pretty reassuring," says Jonathan. "It made me think, 'I don't need to keep knocking at these other doors. This one is wide open and it's got my name on it.'"

Their next epiphany for album number three came from touring Europe with new bosom buddies Foals. "Yannis played me all these old prison recordings," recalls Jonathan, "slave songs accompanied by pickaxes hitting the ground at the same time. The penny dropped: I thought, 'What more do I need?' Nearly all the new songs are just drums and vocals." Now, cooped up in Wales, there are strict rules in place to preserve the visceral immediacy Jonathan heard in those slave songs. They're not playing anything too much in order to preserve the energy they found lacking in 'Arc'. They're going solo for these sessions, a trial run to see if they can produce themselves rather than depend on David Kosten, who worked on 'Man Alive' and 'Arc'.

Then there are Jonathan's lyrics: the madcap pace and delivery of Everything Everything's songs sometimes obscured the conflicted soul within. "I want to sound like someone who's angry and in control of their destiny, instead of whiny and miserable, which I think I was on 'Arc'. I want to sound like the guy who slaps that guy around the face." By its very nature, this should be an easier way to work, he says, but the four still can't suppress their questioning ways. "You think, 'Is that good enough?' We can't ever stop the neurotic side of ourselves." ■ LAURA SNAPES

▶THE DETAILS

- ▶**TITLE** TBC
- ▶**RELEASE DATE** TBC
- ▶**LABEL** Sony RCA
- ▶**PRODUCERS** Everything Everything
- ▶**RECORDED** Giant Wafer, mid Wales
- ▶**TRACKS INCLUDE** TBC
- ▶**JONATHAN HIGGS SAYS** "We're working intuitively, but we don't want to dash it off."

Swim Deep

Austin Williams admits he "didn't listen to music" before Swim Deep released their debut last August. But afterwards, he threw himself into record collecting, almost to his detriment. "It's harder to write now," he says. "I'll listen to Tame Impala and OutKast and I want to be both of those bands. But you don't want to be a copycat. It's important we keep our existing sound."

Austin's creative paralysis over living up to his new idols didn't last long. The Birmingham baggies are currently in a Hackney studio demoing the follow-up to 2013's debut 'Where The Heaven Are We' with no lack of ambition – they've actually written a song called 'Hotel California'. "I feel the Eagles' classic is so big that it's not a bother for me to go up against it," says Austin. He hopes they'll start recording this summer with Dave Fridmann (Sleater-Kinney, MGMT) on the mixing desk. "If we use him, I'm confident it would be one of the best records. We want to put out an EP first, working with a dance producer like François K, which will have, like, a psychedelic Michael Jackson vibe." What was that about second album nerves? "The plan for record two is to make people talk about our music rather than Cavan's choice of trousers."

■ GARY RYAN

- ▶**TITLE** TBC
- ▶**RELEASE DATE** TBC
- ▶**LABEL** RCA

DAN KENDALL, ED MILES, RICHARD JOHNSON

Wild Beasts

'Present Tense' track by track

Tom Fleming on the band's fourth album, due February 24

Wanderlust
"We wanted people to think, 'Shit, have I put the right record on?' It's a big-sounding song about protecting what you've got and grabbing things by the balls."

Nature Boy
"[2011 album] 'Smother' was very layered and dense, but we wanted to be tighter, louder and fresher this time. There's a lot of direct quotes from WWE wrestlers in it: wrestling is about hyper-masculinity; like drag, a construct."

Mecca
"The guitar and the beat were added late – there's something beautiful about making a post-dance record and then sticking a guitar solo on it."

Sweet Spot
"This has a very clean guitar and synth, which we were careful not to overuse. When we sat down to record this album, we realised, 'This wants to be a pop record now.'"

Daughters
"It's a response to the world we're leaving to our children, with people in power consolidating their positions. I have this fantasy about them destroying their parents."

Pregnant Pause
"It starts like a piano ballad and then there's suddenly this huge bass. If you've grown up with Jeff Buckley and Nick Drake, it takes a bit of balls to do that."

A Simple Beautiful Truth
"It feels like a proper pop song, and we wouldn't have been brave enough to do that before."

A Dog's Life
"It's about a dog dying, which is tragic because dogs think they're people. We all think we're something we're not, we all die, and we're all tied to a post and left behind."

Past Perfect
"It's very tempting to idealise the past, but if you're going to be happy, you have to find it in yourself. Again, it's a pop song."

New Life
"It's about a lot of my friends having kids. You always think that you're the first person in the world to do something, but actually there's a line stretching back to the beginning of time."

Palace
"It's a straightforward song and I like having a really big, bright song at the end."

Kelis

Reconciling her passions for food and music, the 'Milkshake' maker has been cooking up a soulful, funky sixth album in LA

Back in 2010, on the release of her fifth album, the dancefloor-fixated, beat-driven 'Flesh Tone', Kelis revealed that she'd nearly quit music to become a chef, having trained at the distinguished Cordon Bleu cookery school in Paris. Followers of the ever-evolving maverick might have been justified in worrying come 2013 when, with no apparent sign of the "darker, more electro" album she'd told *NME* she was "midway through" a year before, she launched a line of sauces called Feast, slickly packaged with no

Foxygen

"We've become obsessed by tales of extraterrestrials in Laurel Canyon. Some of the stories are insane," says Jonathan Rado from his Californian studio. It's here, amid stacks of archive reports on UFO crashes, that Foxygen are currently hard at work on a follow-up to last year's 'We Are the 21st Century Ambassadors Of Peace & Magic'. As such, the California band's fourth album proper apparently sounds like going on the run from alien abduction with Fleetwood Mac. "There's a '70s rock vibe, but with crazy sci-fi synth sounds in there too. It's quite a trip."

After a turbulent 2013, which saw co-founder Sam France break his leg falling from a stage in Minneapolis and former touring member Elizabeth Fey – also Sam's girlfriend – post a scathing attack on France via Tumblr, the pair are hoping the new set of songs will draw a line under recent drama. "We've been producing it ourselves and taking our time with it. I'm looking forward to getting the focus to our music, instead of bullshit controversy. There was a frustrating period when I got pretty depressed. But all of that has filtered into this new record. Not in an 'Oh, I'm so tortured' way. It's a fun listen. It'll surprise a lot of people." ■ AL HORNER

▶**TITLE** TBC
▶**RELEASE DATE** May/June
▶**LABEL** Jagjaguwar

JENN FIVE, LAURA COULSON

Belle And Sebastian

As Belle And Sebastian wound up the 2013 festival season with a show at Bestival, it felt, says Stuart Murdoch, not just like the end of the summer, but the closing of a chapter. The release of B-sides and rarities collection 'The Third Eye Centre' in late August marked the end of Belle And Sebastian's decade-long association with Rough Trade, and Murdoch's feature-length film *God Help The Girl* – the germ of which dates back to 2004 – was finally complete, ready for a premiere in early 2014. "We found ourselves at the end of everything," he laughs, "but quite comfortably, if that makes sense."

Murdoch started writing and, unexpectedly he says, it was "like turning on a tap". It'll be recorded in the spring. "We're just finalising when and where. It's a bit early to start throwing around titles, but we have set ourselves certain goals this time – to throw the net a little wider, collaborate a bit more. It's been almost like writing to order – like, let's write a song that sounds like the 1974 song by Cyprus for the Eurovision Song Contest. Or let's write a song that sounds like it might be played at a town hall in Russia in the '60s. Approaching songwriting that way is quite fun, because, of course, we've been at it for a while!" ■ LOUIS PATTISON

▶**TITLE** TBC
▶**RELEASE DATE** Autumn
▶**LABEL** Matador

indication that they might bring any boys to anyone's yard. But the simple title of her new, EDM-free record, 'Food' – featuring songs such as 'Breakfast', 'Cobbler', 'Friday Fish Fry' and the warm, sticky funk-soul of the previously released 'Jerk Ribs' – shows she's reconciled her two passions.

On finishing her 'Flesh Tone' touring and leaving her deal with Interscope (she's now signed to heavyweight indie Ninja Tune), Kelis ditched an album's worth of dancey material because "so much time had passed by that I'd morphed into somebody else" and followed her newly hungry muse. "Between this and my second album I'd say this gives the best full picture about who I am and how I hear things," she says. "As much as I can escape from music, I can't escape from myself and the way my brain works and the things that bring me joy. It's about nourishment, feeding your body and replenishing and recharging with all the things that we live on, like music and food and love... It's about acknowledging the quality in which you live, and sticking to that, so it's about the food that we eat, the music we listen to, who we listen to it with."

Much of Kelis' listening for 'Food' ("Nothing's really changed in what I listen to... a lot of old soul music, a lot of jazz") was done with producer and LA near-neighbour David Sitek. At his house she cooked (literally) and jammed (not in the 'making preserves' sense) until they had a heavy, vintage soul-toned record that hung together. "He's a genius," says Kelis. "He's brilliant enough to step in when he needs to and step back when he should, and that's the sign of a really amazing producer. We hardly ever talk about music, we just make it. And we eat a lot of food, and we just have a really, genuinely wonderful time. We had such a... what's the word... a *lovefest*." She laughs. Well, if music be the fruit of love... chow down.

■ EMILY MACKAY

▶THE DETAILS

- **▶TITLE** 'Food'
- **▶RELEASE DATE** April 28
- **▶LABEL** Ninja Tune
- **▶PRODUCER** David Sitek
- **▶RECORDED** David Sitek's LA studio
- **▶TRACKS INCLUDE** Jerk Ribs, Breakfast, Cobbler' Friday Fish Fry
- **▶KELIS SAYS** "The record is really honest and it's extremely melodic and it's kind of funny at times. I think this is my favourite album. But I always say that."

Sampha

Over the last six months, Sampha has become the darling of US hip-hop. First there was 'Too Much', his hook-up with Drake, of which the 25-year-old Londoner, full name Sampha Sisay, says: "I stammered a lot. I was nervous. Obviously."

He's also produced tracks for Solange, travelling with her to Accra in Ghana to work on her new album, which all came on the back of collaborations with SBTRKT. Hard to believe, then, that until recently Sisay lacked confidence.

"For a long time I was just trying to find my stride," he says. "I only started thinking along the lines of an album in the last couple of months."

He's just started work on the record and says it will be "more beat-driven" than the music he's known for, adding that he wants to fuse the piano balladry of his track 'Happens' with the electronic soul of 'Without' from last summer's 'Dual' EP. More than anything, Sissay wants it to communicate how he's feeling. "You can feel a bit numb at times in your life," he says. "With music you get to open up yourself and discover new things emotionally. That's what I want my music to be about."

■ CHRIS COTTINGHAM

- **▶TITLE** TBC
- **▶RELEASE DATE** TBC
- **▶LABEL** XL

Damon Albarn

Ongoing rumours about a possible new Blur album just won't go away, but what is more certain is that before it arrives we'll be treated to the first solo album proper from frontman Damon Albarn. Of course, the master of all trades has already composed opera scores and brought us projects as diverse as Gorillaz, The Good, The Bad & The Queen and Africa Express, but this will be the first release to bear his own name since 2003's limited-edition 10-inch 'Democrazy'. He's described it as a "sort of folk soul" project, and with XL impresario Richard Russell on production duties, expect the finished project to land closer to Bobby Womack's 2012 album 'The Bravest Man In The Universe', which Albarn and Russell produced together, than Blur in their festival-headlining pomp. A 21-second black-and-white teaser trailer saw Albarn sat at a piano adorned with a pair of human skulls and a taxidermied owl. The gentle kick drum and piano chords aren't a million miles from Gorillaz' 'On Melancholy Hill'. "Richard does the rhythmic side," Albarn has said, "and I do everything else." The title is still unconfirmed, but 'The Busiest Man In The World' might be apt.

■ KEVIN EG PERRY

- **▶TITLE** TBC
- **▶RELEASE DATE** Spring
- **▶LABEL** XL

Palma Violets

The dust may barely have settled on ramshackle debut '180', but Palma Violets are already scaling new heights for album two. "We went up a mountain in Wales to this barn owned by these East End hippies and wrote six or seven songs," says bassist Chilli Jesson. "Lyrically, our first record was about escaping and being in these fields of magic mushrooms, whereas now we're writing about London and all these great things that happened there. When we got away from it, we realised how lucky we are to have [Palma Violets HQ] Studio 180."

Somewhere in rural Wales lies around two weeks of material ditched because it was too good. "We made too big a leap," says Jesson. "I felt like we lost the element of youth." Happily, there remains at least half an album of songs deemed vibrant enough, 'Goat Gang Go' and 'The Scandal' – debuted on their December tour – among them. Sessions are set to continue back at Studio 180 in the new year, with Bob Rock (Metallica) lined up for production duties. "It's going to be like the change from 'The Clash' to 'Give 'Em Enough Rope' – bigger, but with all those youthful elements still there," Chilli concludes. ■ LISA WRIGHT

- **▶TITLE** TBC
- **▶RELEASE DATE** TBC
- **▶LABEL** Rough Trade

Merchandise

An expanded line-up and a proper record deal means Carson Cox and co are aiming to make a mainstream pop record

Expanded to a five-piece and with a record deal finally in place, the 2014 version of Merchandise is a very different one to the act behind last year's epic, self-released 'Totale Nite' LP. "We're going to remake ourselves as a pop band," says frontman Carson Cox, on the phone from the house they all share in Tampa Bay, Florida, where their forthcoming album – and debut for new label 4AD – is being recorded. The title, says Cox, is a nod to their renewed gameplan. "It's called 'After The End', and it's not like the end is coming, it's like we're living *after* the fucking end!", says the singer.

The line-up changes mean 'After The End' will be Merchandise's first release to feature drummer Elsner Nino and saxophonist Chris Horn, responsible for some extended freak-outs at the band's handful of UK shows to date. But in a move that will likely surprise anyone who's heard 'Begging For Your Life Again/In The City Light', the ambitious 14-minute jam 4AD recently put online to announce their new signings – there

Howler

Originally promised to arrive a year after Howler's debut album 'America Give Up', the follow up 'World Of Joy' instead comes after two years of personnel changes and a period of "reassessment and learning", according to frontman Jordan Gatesmith.

Where previously Gatesmith took up the position of sole mastermind, this time around the Minneapolis quartet are in a collaborative mode. "We've been trying to figure it out," explains the band's founder over the phone. "I still write a lot of the songs but me and Ian [Nygaard, guitar] co-wrote a couple of things."

Early reports described a new, soft-rock direction. That, says Gatesmith, proved a dead end: they're now opting for a sound inspired by Thin Lizzy.

"There's one song called 'Al's Corral'," reveals Jordan. "It's about some shitty bar I went to in Minneapolis and wrote an anthem for. I 100 per cent ripped off 'Jailbreak' by Thin Lizzy. I was pretty proud of myself. I hope I don't get sued..."

■ RHIAN DALY

▶**TITLE** 'World Of Joy'
▶**RELEASE DATE** Spring
▶**LABEL** Rough Trade

Broken Bells

'After The Disco' track-by-track

James Mercer on his new album with Brian 'Danger Mouse' Burton, out February 4

Perfect World
"Brian's beat gives this a Joy Division feel. Lyrically, it's about accepting that life isn't perfect but seeing the beauty in that."

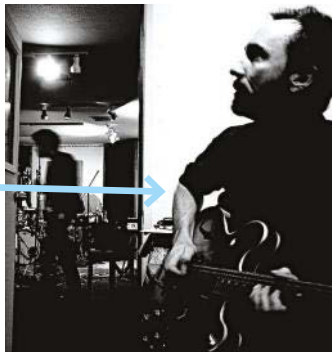
After The Disco
"I love the reggae-ish upbeats at the beginning. It's our attempt at something you'd hear on a dancefloor."

Holding On For Life
"Brian's quite cynical about relationships, but this has a lot of my lines that are more sympathetic."

Leave It Alone
"I improvised a vocal melody – we wrote the rest around it."

The Changing Lights
"I hear this and picture Brian in New York late-night drinking on the Bowery. It's very nostalgic."

Control
"We thought this might be the first single. We have a completely different version of it that'll be released as a B-side."



Lazy Wonderland
"Brian had something that reminded me of a song I'd tried to write for The Shins, so I donated that. It's inspired by Pacific Coast camping trips."

Medicine
"The line *"Girl, one day it all melts into air"* is from a book about modernism someone loaned me. It's about existential crises."

No Matter What You're Told
"I fought for this to stay on the record because I love it. I lost out on some others, but we knew it had to be 11 tracks. No-one wants a double album."

The Angel And The Fool
"I have people in mind in this song, but I don't want to name names. It's about a self-destructive girl."

The Remains Of Rock And Roll
"I love the part between the verse and chorus. The song doesn't really have a conventional structure, it's weird and cool."

Charli XCX

Being the co-songwriter behind one of 2013's most infectious pop hits – Icona Pop's 'I Love It' – made a hot property of Charli XCX. She was subsequently asked to write for Britney Spears and Rita Ora, but instead spent most of 2013 working on her second album, which is inspired by new wave bands like The Waitresses and Bow Wow Wow.

"It's really raw," she says. "And it's very feminine but also angry – there are a lot of songs about sex." So far only the lead single, the Gwen Stefani-like manga-pop of 'SuperLove', has been heard, and Charli explains it's "definitely

ALDO PADALDO, ED MILES, JAMES ORLANDO

fuck.' This next record's not going to be that sleazy, but I feel like it's going to be moody and sentimental."

Right now, the group have written seven songs, and they're aiming for another two by the time they finish recording at the end of January. Guitarist Dave Vassalotti has contributed three tracks so far and, according to Carson, has more influence on this record than anything Merchandise have done previously, including what Cox describes as some "really insane Robert Fripp shit". Insanity seems to be a recurring theme. "We've already exploded our reality, and now we're living in our weird acid trip existence," laughs Cox. " The album's going to be like what would happen if you went crazy and then became a rock star in your own insane imagination." ■ MATT WILKINSON

won't be any lengthy songs on the album at all. As Carson explains: "That's basically our long song for the year," he says. "We don't have to put any long songs on the record, so now we can just do a formal pop record. I'm talking about pop, rock, R&B. When we were recording 'Begging...' I was like, 'This needs to be sleazy as

▶THE DETAILS

▶**TITLE** 'After The End'
▶**RELEASE DATE** June
▶**LABEL** 4AD
▶**PRODUCERS** Merchandise
▶**RECORDED** Merchandise's house in Tampa Bay, Florida
▶**TRACKS INCLUDE** TBC
▶**CARSON SAYS** "'Totale Nite' was the end of the book. This is a whole new book."

Alt-J

The success of the Mercury Prize-winning debut 'An Awesome Wave' took Alt-J by surprise – and all the way around the world. Now ready to get back into the studio, the experience of being out on the road has given them even more guts to experiment. "It's made us realise that you shouldn't worry too much about whether what you create in the studio is 'playable'," explains keyboard player Gus Unger-Hamilton. "We manage to play 'An Awesome Wave' live with no backing tracks or anything like that, so I think that's given us a lot of confidence going into album two."

The new LP will continue to explore the band's preoccupation with vocal textures: "I think vocal harmony is a key part of our sound, and will continue to be for the moment," says Gus. "All humans have a profound attraction to voices singing in harmony."

One new track, 'Warm Foothills', has already been debuted live, coming from the writing sessions they did for British indie film *Leave To Remain*. Whether that track will end up on the album, Gus says, is not yet decided. It's still very early days, and they're in no hurry. Says Gus: "We don't have too much pressure coming from anybody except the fans who want a new album!" ■ JENNY STEVENS

▶**TITLE** TBC
▶**RELEASE DATE** TBC
▶**LABEL** Infectious

Dum Dum Girls

Last autumn, Dum Dum Girls singer Dee Dee Penny was onstage in Los Angeles when her voice cracked. As the US garage-punks' West Coast tour continued, it grew worse. "I was freaking out," she says now. "It was like I was in a superhero movie and suddenly my powers just disappeared."

Spending thousands of dollars visiting throat specialists trying to mend her strained vocal chords, Penny describes the six months that followed as the "most depressing-as-shit" of her life. But the experience has made the quartet's forthcoming third album their most human record yet. "I had all these songs written and instrumentals recorded, but couldn't put vocals to them for months. It made me really think about the songs. It made the album the most honest I've made. We've always portrayed ourselves as this snarling punk monster. On 'Too True', it's like, Hey, we're fallible after all, you know."

Penny was eventually able to record her vocals for the album, which is inspired by Madonna and Suede as well as punk poets Patti Smith and Lou Reed. She isn't back to 100 per cent health yet. "Live shows are still a struggle, but I'm overcoming it." This superhero isn't defeated yet. ■ AL HORNER

▶**TITLE** 'Too True'
▶**RELEASE DATE** January 27
▶**LABEL** Sub Pop

the poppiest thing on there. Because I was growing up while writing [debut] 'True Romance', there were multiple experiments and styles, but my aim this time is to make something that sounds like one record as opposed to scattered fragments of my mind." Although there's been studio time with a retinue of producers including Paul Epworth, Naughty Boy and Ariel Rechtshaid, her main ally is Patrik Berger, who previously helped Robyn dance on her own. "I've been recording in Stockholm in this little hut until 5am every day, getting cabin fever. You can hear that intensity on the album." ■ GARY RYAN

▶**TITLE** TBC
▶**RELEASE DATE** Autumn/winter
▶**LABEL** Atlantic

Planning-torock

"Making this record made me realise I've still got something to say," says Berlin-via-Bolton's Jam Rostron of her upcoming third album as Planningtorock. Discarding her stage moniker, Janine, in favour of something more gender-neutral, Rostron returned to the Berlin studio she shares with a collective of like-minded producers and approached this album with a renewed sense of purpose, building on her patriarchy-busting 2013 EP 'Misogyny Drop Dead'.

"It's a record that's learning and unlearning itself – unlearning conditioning, information from authorities and unlearning the hetero-normative propaganda that's projected on to you the minute you're born," she says of 'All Love's Legal'.

With a copy of Malmö Free University's feminist handbook *Do The Right Thing* on hand by the mixing desk and a sonic palette rich with pitched-down vocals and warm, inviting dance rhythms Rostron's made an album she hopes will help liberate people: a joyful, accessible space where radical feminist dance anthems, rather than patriarchy, rules. ■ CHARLOTTE RICHARDSON ANDREWS

▶**TITLE** 'All Love's Legal'
▶**RELEASE DATE** February 10
▶**LABEL** Human Level

Cloud Nothings

Cloud Nothings released 'Attack On Memory' two years ago, but toured it right up until winter 2013. On top of this relentless schedule, the band's 22-year-old lynchpin, Dylan Baldi, was splitting his free time between his native Cleveland and France. "It was really weird not to have one place I called home," he says. "I ended up finding out that I could focus on weird little things to make me happy in every place."

That feeling inspired Cloud Nothings' third proper full-length, 'Here And Nowhere Else', which forsakes the noisy nihilism of 'Attack On Memory' (engineered by Steve Albini) for a semi-return to their crackly power-pop of old. This time they recorded with John Congleton (St Vincent, Anna Calvi) and aimed for a faster, more complex sound. It ended up being a short record – just eight tracks and 32 minutes – written in a two-week flurry between finally getting off tour and into Water Music Studios in Hoboken, New Jersey. "It's a statement about trying to find something within that can make you feel like you're home wherever you are," says Dylan. "So this album deals with the same adolescent malaise that everyone says I write about, but it does it in a more positive light."

■ MISCHA PEARLMAN

▶**TITLE** 'Here And Nowhere Else'
▶**RELEASE DATE** March 31
▶**LABEL** Wichita

Katy B

Don't let the single 'Crying For No Reason' fool you. The early single from new album 'Little Red' sees the British queen of clubland try her hand at a pneumatic, piano-led ballad, but it doesn't mean she's abandoned the sound that once defined her. "I definitely haven't moved away from clubbing," Katy says from the Rinse FM studios, where she's redoing one last verse. "But you could probably play most of the songs on my first album in a club, whereas this one you probably couldn't. It's been really nice for me to be able to show that, because life isn't one constant party."

Bits of 'Little Red' were written in the Cotswolds and on a solo trip to a cottage in Norfolk that Katy took in the spring of 2012, but it was recorded back in London at Rinse. Katy is not short of collaborators these days – Joker, Jessie Ware, MJ Cole and Magnetic Man all feature on 'Little Red' – but Rinse FM founder Geeneus has kept her close to her roots. "On one hand there's house on this album, which is more what people are listening to now, and what I started writing at 17," Katy explains. "At the same time, I'm writing music from scratch with pianos and not thinking about tempos but still making it electronic. It has a Madonna vibe to it almost."

■ HAZEL SHEFFIELD

▶**TITLE** 'Little Red'
▶**RELEASE DATE** February 3
▶**LABEL** Columbia

The Swedish singer used transcendental meditation to help finish her album trilogy

Lykke Li

"I *hang on, don't want to miss my prime/'Cos time will fly*", Lykke Li sang on 'Youth Novels'. Time *has* flown, but six years later, the Swedish songwriter – now living in LA – is still contemplating the ageing process.

"I see my albums as a trilogy, with 'Youth Novels' as the first one and hopefully this one as the last one in this chapter," says the 27-year-old. "In any woman's life, 21 to 27 is an intense period. I'm starting to feel like a woman, but the concept is an abstract one."

Considering Li's albums as a trilogy gives an indication of what's in store. The sweet, acoustic songwriting of 'Youth Novels' was followed by the more muscular, aggressive-sounding 'Wounded Rhymes', which had tougher themes of lust and heartbreak. On her third album, she pushes those ideas further, using the emotions from another break-up to explore what it means to be a woman in the world: "It's always about me and the guilt and the shame and we anticipated."

Thematically, too, there's a shift. This time, as the rather cynical title suggests, the songs aren't all about pizza, beer and girls. Not exclusively, anyway.

"It's about being a young, wily teenager," explains Titus, "and growing up into an older adult. It's about being a kid in America, it's about gratuitous drug use, it's about girls, it's about all that stuff. We're New York boys that have been through a lot and I wanted a name that would capture that." ■ MISCHA PEARLMAN

▶**TITLE** 'Jaded & Faded'
▶**RELEASE DATE** TBC
▶**LABEL** Cult

Cerebral Ballzy

Hedonistic New York punks Cerebral Ballzy are promising that 'Jaded & Faded', the Dave Sitek-produced follow-up to their eponymous 2011 debut, will be something of an evolution. "We're not 19-year-old wastoids any more," singer Honor Titus explains. "There's a bit more seasoning to our tirade. The album's way more melodic. We're taking a lot of power-punk influences and going more for the craftsmanship."

That different direction is something the band wanted to try anyway, but having TV On The Radio man Sitek on board made it that much easier. "He definitely harnessed the sound we wanted to achieve," beams Titus. "He's a genius. It was really rad to work with someone who could throw ideas off of us and make us land even farther than

TOM MARTIN, DEAN CHALKLEY, JENN FIVE, POONEH GHANA, JAN WELTERS, LASSE MARTEN

the hurt and the pride and the confusion of being a woman."

The resulting power ballads see her stretch her voice further than ever before. "There are really two parallel lines that I'm working on this album. One is super powerful and big – everything is very big – but at the same time I wrote some of the songs with just me and the guitar," she explains.

Some unusual practices have been helping Lykke to gain that focus – including transcendental meditation, the technique practised by The Beatles in the '60s. "It helps you get in touch with your thinking," she explains. "I'm already very in tune with what I feel, but this is to help me become a novelist."

▶THE DETAILS

▶**TITLE** TBC
▶**RELEASE DATE** May
▶**LABEL** Atlantic
▶**PRODUCERS** Lykke Li, Björn Yttling, Greg Kurstin
▶**RECORDED** Music & Words, Stockholm
▶**TRACKS INCLUDE** Never Gonna Love Again, No Rest For The Wicked
▶**LYKKE LI SAYS** "What I've been trying to focus on is to get life and vibrancy onto the record."

While longtime collaborator Björn Yttling helped on production, and Greg Kurstin (Kelly Clarkson, Pink, The Shins) produced some tracks, Lykke is taking the helm now and calling some unusual shots, such as using demo recordings of the vocals to capture the vitality she's looking for. And by shunning heavy production, Li hopes her music might be considered as something other than pop. "I always feel like I've been slightly misunderstood. As a woman [in pop] you get judged for appearances or things like that I really don't care about," she explains. "If anything I want to be seen as a singer-songwriter rather than a pop artist. I really feel like I've found my voice." ■ HAZEL SHEFFIELD

Klaxons

Although you could fairly say the road to Klaxons' third album hasn't exactly been smooth, in one sense, they planned it all along. "When we started, we promised to make three records," says Jamie Reynolds, a week out of the studio. "One each about the future, the past and the present. This record is very much about the present, an emotionally honest album about technological and personal progression." Klaxons have explored new electronic areas on the follow-up to 2010's blighted 'Surfing The Void'. It's inspired by Berlin house label Innervisions and sees production from Mark Ronson, James Ford, Gorgon City, The Chemical Brothers' Tom Rowlands, and James Murphy, who spent two days working on a track called 'New Reality'. "It's very classy and euphoric, I think," says Jamie. "It covers leftfield electronica and pop. It's where we always said we were gonna place ourselves – it just took us a while to learn how to get there." Given that they started working in January 2011, it's been a long while coming. But time "seems irrelevant to us" says Jamie.

■ DAVID RENSHAW
▶**TITLE** TBC
▶**RELEASE DATE** Spring
▶**LABEL** TBC

MKS

Despite their past success as the original Sugababes, when Mutya Buena, Keisha Buchanan and Siobhàn Donaghy became MKS in 2011, they didn't rest on their laurels. "We booked all our sessions ourselves," says Buchanan. "We tracked [Blood Orange man] Dev Hynes down. We called him up and said, 'We're a British group, we had a track called 'Overload'...' And he was like, 'Shut up! I've wanted to work with you guys for ages!'"

MKS still consider themselves the underdogs, even though just the rumour of an 'Origibabes' reunion was big news. "We've always been that way," says Buchanan. "We were three odd teenagers at the start. And it's still exactly the same." It did take some time for the three to get to know each other again though. "I was used to Siobhan and Muts wearing tracksuit bottoms and trainers, eating fish'n'chips," says Buchanan. "But as soon as we started recording we were like, 'Oh wow, it's still there.' Sugababes is who we are, even without that name."

■ EVE BARLOW
▶**TITLE** TBC
▶**RELEASE DATE** TBC
▶**LABEL** Polydor

Fucked Up

Fucked Up may not have committed much of their as yet untitled fourth album to tape yet, but the songs themselves date back some time. "We wrote most of the music for this in June and July 2012," explains Mike Haliechuk, guitarist for the progressive Canadian punks. "When we write a song all the intensity is already there, but our writing process takes so long. We arrange the bare skeleton of it and the song only really becomes what it is over the year we spend with it in the studio." The latter half of the process has been taking place in several different studios, including Steve Albini's Electrical Audio in Chicago, and promises to yield a new, more thoroughly edited kind of album. "It's going to be a little bit out there, but I think this album will be more concise than the last one too," says Haliechuk. "It'll be comparable to 'The Chemistry Of Common Life', but with shorter songs."

■ MISCHA PEARLMAN
▶**TITLE** TBC
▶**RELEASE DATE** TBC
▶**LABEL** Matador

The Maccabees

After the success of their third album, the London band have been working on a follow-up for a year – but they're still waiting for that "Eureka!" moment

Liars

As much as Liars remain happy with their last album, 2012's electronically driven 'WIXIW', its creation became a grind: laboured, intense and fuelled by "fistfuls of pills". "I think I got a little caught up in analysing the difficulties and anxieties of making music," says frontman Angus Andrew. Leftovers from 'WIXIW' were meant to be collected for a follow-up, but when Andrew began assessing the material, he was able to channel new ideas spontaneously and unhindered. Not only was it more fun, he says, but the band's label recognised the superiority of the new songs. "I think having all that other stuff on the side meant there was no pressure to produce."

The result, 'Mess', was produced by Andrew in his LA home and features titles including 'Mess On A Mission', 'Boyzone' and 'Left Speaker Blown'. Like 'WIXIW', it features electronic textures, but the newfound rebellion against overanalysis is reflected in its themes. "In general, the lyrics toy with the idea of having a problem or a messed-up head, like I do a lot, but then acknowledging that and utilising it rather than harping on about how difficult it makes things," says Andrew. "Even though the reality of it is still fairly troubled and distraught, it's fun and immediate – and you won't have to spend too much time thinking about it." ■ CIAN TRAYNOR

▶**TITLE** 'Mess'
▶**RELEASE DATE** March
▶**LABEL** Mute

Hookworms

So that mind-bending freakbeat track 'Pearl Mystic', the pinnacle of 2013's psychotropic pop explosion? Total accident. "Half of our last album was written in the studio," says Hookworms frontman MJ. "We just decided to record everything we had, putting together loops and parts of songs. Then we realised that we couldn't play the songs live as they sounded worse. So this time we've actually tried to write an album."

From August 2013, the Leeds band set up in MJ's Suburban Home studio and wrote as a group, aiming for the crackling energy of Detroit garage rock, the Stooges, The MC5 and The Modern Lovers. The results? "I guess they're more rock-orientated than the last, and a lot of the new record's got a lot more synths on it," says MJ, who mentions Stereolab as a hint for where the electronics are heading.

So not only was 'Pearl Mystic' an accident, but so was their reputation as the north's premier psych doyens. "Not to say the songs are any less sprawling, but there is a definite conscious shift away from psychedelia on this new record. That wasn't necessarily our intention with our band; we started this band because we wanted to play music like Comets On Fire."

■ MARK BEAUMONT

▶**TITLE** TBC
▶**RELEASE DATE** Summer
▶**LABEL** Weird World

Peace

When Peace returned to the studio to write a 'comeback' single in November, they came out with four tracks, including a Bowie-inspired tune on which singer Harry Koisser tries to recreate an orchestra on a 12-string guitar. "That came from listening to 'Ziggy Stardust...' on repeat," he says.

So, minded to write a whole album, the Birmingham band embarked on new sessions that have so far delved into disco, opera, Motown and "intense, fuzzy, sexy groove rock". "I'm more inspired on the road than I ever was at home," says Koisser. "I'd never seen anything up until touring. I'd never even seen England. Now we've been to Japan and America, seeing other cultures. Also, now I'm 22 I'm capable of thoughts that aren't, 'I'm heartbroken over someone I've just met' or, 'I feel sick'. Instead, I'm actually *thinking*."

Having now experienced success too, the band have grown up – to some degree. "There is this song which is about money. It's the first time we've ever had to deal with that. Having a house and enough money to be able to buy a guitar. I can't afford a sports car, but I live in a house and I pay bills. Well, I *get* bills..."

■ MARK BEAUMONT

▶**TITLE** TBC
▶**RELEASE DATE** TBC
▶**LABEL** Columbia

Walk up three flights of steps in a poky building in south London, past the mountain bikes shunted against the wall, and you'll find yourself in The Maccabees' HQ. It's a neat little hideaway with a mixing desk and a rehearsal room – the perfect place to bash out the follow-up to 2012's 'Given To The Wild'. Or, equally, the perfect place to procrastinate. "We started the record at the beginning of this year [2013]," says guitarist Felix White. "We went into the studio with the idea that it was going to be finished by now. And we've finished *two* songs. We've got a lot of music, but every time you write something new, it raises the standard. We have to make sure it doesn't become [1994's long-delayed Stone Roses album] 'Second Coming'. We don't have enough money to make 'Second Coming'!"

The Maccabees' new LP – the first they will be producing themselves – is still, therefore, in its earliest stages. But the band reckon the success of 'Given...' has liberated rather than strangled them; that the impressive sales figures (Number Four on the UK Albums Chart) are proof that you can succeed by bucking expectations. "'Given To The Wild' was a very different record," explains Felix. "It just proved that if you're willing to see through the ideas that aren't expected of you, it can pay off."

Frontman Orlando Weeks joins in: "Because we haven't really come across the songs that set the tone or mood for this record yet, we're kind of shooting in the dark," he says. "But I like that: there isn't a specific thing I'm trying to funnel stuff into. Now and then... panic would be the wrong word, but you do feel flummoxed by it. But then you take a deep breath, and you hit again."

There's a desire to do things differently, too. 'Given...' was largely made by each member swapping files over email. This time, there's a much stronger emphasis on playing together and crafting tracks in the studio. "I think we all still love 'Given...' for what it was," says Felix. "But we'd decided we weren't going to think about how it would work live, so some of the songs didn't work in that arena."

Given that The Maccabees proved their live chops at 2012's festivals, harnessing that energy to the full-bloom textures of their last LP is nothing to be sniffed at. "It's just got to be better than the last one, hasn't it?" says Orlando. No pressure then, chaps. And definitely no need to panic. ■ BEN HEWITT

▶THE DETAILS

- ▶**TITLE** TBC
- ▶**RELEASE DATE** September
- ▶**LABEL** Fiction
- ▶**PRODUCERS** The Maccabees
- ▶**RECORDED** Elephant & Castle, south London
- ▶**TRACKS INCLUDE** TBC
- ▶**FELIX SAYS** "'Given...' was quite a composed record, because we were what we wanted to make. We're trying to make this one more direct, but still having that atmosphere and all that different stuff going on too."

Thurston Moore

Stoke Newington seems like a strange place for Thurston Moore to have made his new home, yet this leafy part of London has long held a special place in the former Sonic Youth man's heart. "I wanted to move here in the '70s, because I really liked the music that was coming out of London," he says. "I never made it, as I didn't have any money, so I stayed in New York and started Sonic Youth."

Moore's new home exerts a big influence on his new record. Before settling on 'Detonation', Moore titled it 'Sexy Secrets' – a slightly odd name in light of Moore's split with wife Kim Gordon. It contains songs written during the sessions for his last record, but also some recorded more recently, with tracks including 'Sunday Stage', 'Detonation' and 'Germs Burn'. "The album," he explains, "is a pot pourri. It's going to have some new music on it, as well as some of my New York material that was recorded by my Chelsea Light Moving band. There's a couple of live tracks from the first album [with CLM], some other spurious sound sources and some music that was recorded here in London with musicians that I've begun to play with as Thurston Moore UK. But then it's all Thurston Moore UK, because I guess I *am* Thurston Moore UK now." ■ MISCHA PEARLMAN

- ▶**TITLE** 'Detonation'
- ▶**RELEASE DATE** Summer
- ▶**LABEL** Matador

War On Drugs

Adam Granduciel hopes he never again obsesses over an album like he did with the forthcoming 'Lost In The Dream'. "There were some really dark times when I thought I might have to check myself in somewhere," he says. "During mixing, I was on the verge of a nervous breakdown." Granduciel gave up playing shows for a year to focus on a follow-up to 2011's acclaimed 'Slave Ambient', and though that process involved depression and isolation, it also inspired him to try and reach listeners on a new level. Track titles such as 'Under The Pressure', 'Red Eyes', 'Suffering' and 'Disappearing' suggest a difficult listen, but Granduciel says the grand arrangements chase an "epic" rock quality designed for late-night driving, while the songs arise from the vulnerability of transitioning between relationships.

Listening to a test pressing, Granduciel says the album has opened his eyes to the scope of everything that came before. "I spent the last 15 years thinking everything I did was just lucky happenstance," he says. "With this record I decided I was going to put a little more faith in myself and just go for it." ■ CIAN TRAYNOR

- ▶**TITLE** 'Lost In The Dream'
- ▶**RELEASE DATE** March 17
- ▶**LABEL** Secretly Canadian

DAN KENDALL, AARON FARLEY, JENN FIVE

Foster The People

After touring Foster The People's debut album 'Torches' extensively, Mark Foster couldn't quit the road. Venturing to India, Africa, Israel, Turkey and the Middle East, he set out to soak up the world but found a new kind of awareness. "It forced me to reprioritise my life," he admits. "I saw the way that other people were living and it really made me stop and think about how I was living back home. For me that was the source of life for this record. One of the biggest themes is consumerism and the ugly side of capitalism."

Holing up in a riad studio in Morocco with producer Paul Epworth, and later in LA, Foster emerged with a darker album than 'Torches'. "The target is more emotional, more introspected... 'Torches' was full of joy that I figured was at the heart of the

Foster The People sound, but this record is kind of hidden among ghosts and distant memories." Not that the album is all misty Eastern moodscapes – Foster promises Nile Rodgers disco, '90s guitar pop and hard-rock grit in tracks including 'Best Friends', 'Coming Of Age' and 'Beginner's Guide To Destroying The Moon'. "This record is very guitar driven – I haven't played this much guitar in a long time," he says.

■ MARK BEAUMONT

▶TITLE 'Supermodel'
▶RELEASE DATE March 24
▶LABEL Columbia

Sharon Van Etten

Following her 2009 debut 'Because I Was In Love' and its 2010 follow-up 'Epic', Sharon Van Etten's 'Tramp' brought her the kind of wide-ranging attention that saw her being asked to write a song for country and western soap *Nashville*. But success brought its own set of problems, intensifying her touring commitments and making it difficult to find time for loved ones. "Part of the journey of the last couple of years has been wondering if it's possible to be in a relationship when you're touring nine months of the year," Sharon says over the phone from New York. "How can I have a personal life when I'm working so much?"

Produced by The National's Aaron Dessner and featuring guest turns from Beirut's Zach Condon, the success of 'Tramp' also made Sharon worry whether she was admired for her own ability or for her association with the musicians she worked with. Just to make sure, she's producing her fourth album herself, and keeping guest turns to friends. "I decided I needed to prove to myself that it was my songwriting," she says. Listening

Metronomy

'Love Letters' track by track

Frontman Joe Mount on their fourth LP, due in March

The Upsetter
"I went camping with Oscar [Cash, keyboards] in Devon and found myself really wanting to have a guitar so we could play old Beatles songs around the campfire. So this is kind of a campfire singalong."

I'm Aquarius
"I'm a Virgo, but there's a nice tradition of these songs from the '60s when astrology was the really cool thing to sing about, like 'Aquarius' [by The 5th Dimension], that I wanted to be part of."

Monstrous
"Originally, the whole song was played on a Baldwin electric harpsichord, the same type used on 'Because' by The Beatles. It's a medieval-style song about the end of a party, wanting, like, your parents to come and get you."

Love Letters
"There's this French musical, *Les Demoiselles De Rochefort*, and I was imagining how French people from the '60s might dance to its songs when I came up with this. The piano sound is inspired by The Beach Boys' 'Wild Honey'."

Month Of Sundays
"The Metronomy live band play on it with these guys called The Proper Ornaments, who are aficionados of jangly guitar music. It was all recorded live, apart from the vocals."

Boy Racers
"This is an instrumental, but that follows months of me trying to write a spoken word thing to go over the top. I'm still too self-conscious."

Call Me
"I think it's in the same vein as 'Johnny And Mary' by Robert Palmer. I like songs like that where the vocal is just doing the same thing as an instrument."

The Most Immaculate Haircut
"I wanted it to be a duet with Connan Mockasin about his hair, but he was busy recording. The splashing sound you hear is actually a very elegant dive by my girlfriend on the first family holiday we had after my son was born."

Reservoir
"It's about a place near where

I grew up. Throughout my life, it was somewhere where I'd go to do different things. And it's also about friendships that change as you grow up."

Never Wanted
"I quite liked the idea of doing a song that was very bare, and I built the lyrics around that idea as well. It's one of my favourite tracks on the record, because it's one of those things I never thought I would do."

The follow-up to breakthrough album 'Tramp' incorporates some R&B influences alongside the "standard mid-tempo Sharon guitar ballads"

to Sade, Cat Power and electronic duo Glass Candy helped cement the direction for 'Are We There?', an album that still contains "standard mid-tempo Sharon guitar ballads" (such as 'Afraid Of Nothing', featuring Shearwater's Jonathan Meiburg, and 'Your Love Is Killing Me') but also veers towards an R&B-influenced direction on the likes of 'Break Me'. She and her core band recorded together in Weehawken, New Jersey, keeping a "humane" work schedule and inviting Torres' Mackenzie Scott, Lower Dens' Jana Hunter and Efterklang affiliate Peter Broderick in to contribute. There, they worked on a piano used by John Lennon, while sessions in Manhattan saw them play the grand piano Patti Smith used on 'Horses'.

Where 'Tramp' was largely about Sharon's decade-old relationship with an abusive ex-boyfriend in Tennessee, here she's keen to move on, focusing on her current relationship, which has been on and off for the past eight years. The songs are about "how beautiful it's been, and what a struggle it's been", she says, mentioning that she and her boyfriend recently moved in together – before she moved out again. The title alludes to how her home "has been everywhere" over the last two years, "whether it's my own place or how at peace I am with myself, you know? The constant battle of whether I'm being selfish for pursuing my music? I don't know." ■ LAURA SNAPES

▶THE DETAILS

- ▶**TITLE** 'Are We There?'
- ▶**RELEASE DATE** May
- ▶**PRODUCER** Sharon Van Etten
- ▶**RECORDED** The Shirebox, New Jersey; Electric Lady, New York
- ▶**TRACKS INCLUDE** Afraid Of Nothing, Break Me, Your Love Is Killing Me, Tarifa
- ▶**SHARON VAN ETTEN SAYS** "My writing's getting better and the arrangements are getting weirder, in a good way."

Chlöe Howl

Having quit school at 16 to pursue a pop career, Chlöe Howl's debut album describes her own alternative curriculum. "Each one is about a point where I've learned a lesson," she says of the 12 songs she culled from a potential 60. "It's like a little guide to myself." This guide – recorded in New York and London – also doubles up as a shitlist for those who have wronged Howl. She's blasé about some of the songs (which range from electronic pop to big ballads) being "a bit bitchy", and doesn't care who they offend. "I feel like the subjects of them would be scared to admit it anyway," she cackles. "They're about a selection of people who weren't nice."

Her favourite is future single 'Disappointed' – the first song she wrote that convinced her she was a dab hand at songwriting – and it's dedicated to the first guy who ever made her cry. "You know when your parents say, 'I'm not angry, I'm disappointed', and it's the worst thing that could ever be said, ever? I wanted to do that to him because he left me out in the cold."

■ DAVID RENSHAW

- ▶**TITLE** 'Chlöe Howl'
- ▶**RELEASE DATE** June 9
- ▶**LABEL** Columbia

Grimes

Signing to Jay Z's management company Roc Nation at the end of 2013, Clare Boucher joked that she'd "joined The X-Men". Having kicked her way into the mainstream with third album, 'Visions', which was made at home in insomnia-fuelled sessions on Apple's *Garage Band*, 2014's follow-up will likely be a slicker proposition. "I feel like it's a step up," she has said. "I'm really trying to have it sound professional... not necessarily pop music, but maybe in the sense that Nine Inch Nails is professional quality." Although the release was originally pencilled for early 2014, it might take a bit longer. "It's important to me that [it's] better than 'Visions' technically, but it's also really important to me that it has the same heart and soul and isn't rushed," Grimes writes on her blog. "I also might do some crazy things... that I don't want to say yet, that might make it a bit longer, but will be reeaaally worth it." We don't doubt it. ■ LEONIE COOPER

- ▶**TITLE** TBC
- ▶**RELEASE DATE** TBC
- ▶**LABEL** 4AD

Real Estate

"Have you ever lived in Brooklyn? I like it, but the light pollution, the thick heat in the summer, the noise... it can be a pretty oppressive place to be," sighs Real Estate frontman Martin Courtney. It was this claustrophobia that inspired the indie rockers' third studio album 'Atlas': "It's about not knowing where you want to be, but knowing it's not here," he says. If the band's first two albums were drenched in the nostalgia of their early lives in the New Jersey suburbs, this album is about "adventure", he continues. "It's like us leaving home for the first time." Recorded in Wilco's Chicago studio ("I didn't dare open a can of beer in case I spilled it all over a vintage guitar and had an angry Jeff Tweedy to deal with"), 'Atlas' moves into territory outside of the indie-pop jangle of 2011's 'Days'. "I've been listening to a lot of '70s singer-songwriters: Nick Drake, Joni Mitchell. But this isn't an introspective folk record. It's the opposite, actually. There's one song, 'The Bend', with this big bombastic classic rock outro on that makes us feel like Black Sabbath," the frontman reveals. "But it still sounds like us. We might have 'left home', but we still remember where we came from." ■ AL HORNER

- ▶**TITLE** 'Atlas'
- ▶**RELEASE DATE** March
- ▶**LABEL** Domino

DUSDIN CONDREN, TOM MARTIN, GETTY, TIM EVE

Cee-Lo Green

Despite titling his fifth solo album 'Girl Power', Cee-Lo Green's next record is not a collection of soulful Spice Girls covers. "It's a homage to all things women," he explains. "Women happen to be our most miraculous muse. I talk about 'Girl Power' in terms of the way they affect the external – [men] probably only want to match our shirt and socks because of a woman – and the way they affect our emotions." Tracks include 'She's Mine', "which very honestly depicts jealousy", and 'Somebody Thinks I'm Somebody'. "I address sex and sexuality far more often than anything," he says. "There's a song called 'Mother May I?' that I did with Mark Ronson about how there's nothing more precious than a mother's permission. Since my mother's deceased, I have to ask her from on high to continue to be myself: 'May I express myself this way? May I feel this way?'"

Aided by the likes of UK producer/songwriter Paul Epworth, Green is characteristically bullish about the record's sound. "To me, the tempo is almost punk rock. I'm like Iggy Pop! It's what I hope to be a masterpiece. A magnum opus. A reinvention of the wheel." ■ GARY RYAN

▶TITLE 'Girl Power'
▶RELEASE DATE Autumn
▶LABEL Warner

The Cribs

The Cribs aren't good at taking holidays. Since announcing a planned leave of indie absence at the tail end of 2012, they've let slip that they're working on *two* new albums. "I feel like there's two sides to the band – a punk rock side and a poppy side – and we've always tried to balance them," says bassist Gary Jarman. "The idea this time is to let them exist separately as different records."

The punky one came from 2012's 'In The Belly Of The Brazen Bull', when the band decided to keep back some tracks recorded with Nirvana producer Steve Albini. "There's one called 'Give Good Time' which is really like the punk rock and grunge I grew up with, and there's one called 'Agoraphobia' which has this dirty riff and a screamy chorus," says Gary. "And one's called 'What Have You Done For Me?', with this quiet-loud dynamic. They sound like the records I always wanted to make as a kid." The trio plan to get back to Albini's studio later in the year and finish the record within a week.

Material for the poppy record, meanwhile, was written over last summer's festival season, with a session in Portland pencilled in this month. "The tracks don't have names yet, but there are two in particular I'm really into," the bassist says. "I really think one of them is a pop smash. And there's one that's all fuzz bass and geek-rock-style synth lines."

Despite their seemingly grand plans, the band's intentions are still as simple as ever: "The worst thing we could do is write for separate records, because it would almost be like playing dress-up or something," Gary concludes. "We're just writing without any intent and seeing what fits." ■ LISA WRIGHT

▶TITLES TBC
▶RELEASE DATE TBC
▶LABEL Wichita

Lana Del Rey

Between the David Lynch-style short films, the brooding lyrics and the rare public appearances, you suspect Lana Del Rey places great stock in being enigmatic. And so it is with a follow-up to 2012's mega-selling 'Born To Die': one minute there wasn't one, then there was. In February last year, she told *Vogue* that she wasn't sure she'd make another album: "What would I say? I feel like everything I wanted to say, I've said already."

Then, in October, she blamed a fickle muse for a lack of new music: "I don't want to say, 'Yeah, definitely, the next one's better than this one,' because I don't really hear a next one. My muse is very fickle. She only comes to me sometimes, which is annoying."

Then, at the Hollywood premiere of her *Tropico* film, Del Rey heralded the last stage of her 'Born To Die' era and said, "I really just wanted us all to be together so I could try and visually close out my chapter before I release the new record, 'Ultraviolence'." Boom. So far little has emerged about what she has planned. Perhaps even Del Rey herself doesn't know. ■ KEVIN EG PERRY

▶TITLE 'Ultraviolence'
▶RELEASE DATE TBC
▶LABEL Interscope

WIREIMAGE, ROSS JARMAN

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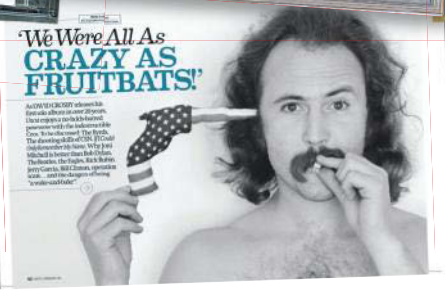


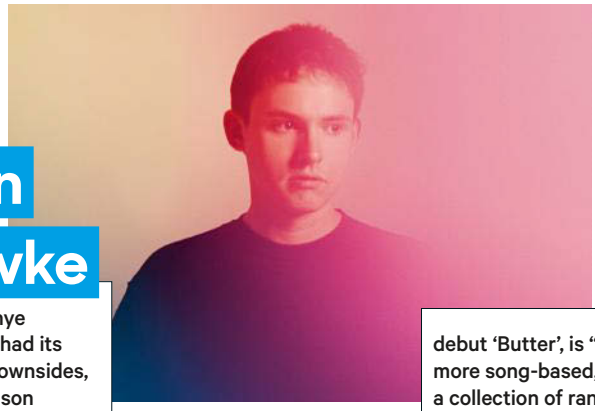
Django Django

Sick of waiting for the follow-up to 2012's 'Django Django'? We might be partly to blame for that. "This time last year we were talking about going into lockdown to do the next album. Then we got asked to do the NME Awards Tour and to go to America, all this mad stuff that we couldn't turn down," says drummer Dave Maclean, on the phone from the Scottish Highlands, where he's appearing in a short film shot by his brother, former Beta Band man John Maclean. "The first half of *this* year we'll definitely be in lockdown. It's time. People have started writing to us saying, 'Are you guys actually making a record or not?'"

Though it's early days, album number two will be informed by the way the band's sound changed as they toured that debut album, turning their quirky electronic pop into rave-inducing anthems. Where the first one was written largely in Maclean's bedroom, this one is being worked on by the whole band in their London practice space, "which is basically like my bedroom but without the bed", Dave notes. The mission is to produce a follow-up, not a radical reinvention. "We can't seem to escape our sound; Vincent's playing surf guitar, Tommy's playing his John Carpenter keyboards and the harmonies come out," says Maclean. "It's just the way that things happen. My job is to try and make sense of all those pieces at the right time." ■ DAN STUBBS

▶**TITLE** TBC
▶**RELEASE DATE** Summer
▶**LABEL** Because Music

Hudson Mohawke



Working with Kanye West on 'Yeezus' had its upsides and its downsides, according to Hudson Mohawke. On the one hand, the 27-year-old producer from Glasgow, real name Ross Birchard, got to go jet-skiing in Hawaii with hip-hop royalty, including the man himself, Drake and Rick Ross. On the other, West "only sleeps for about three hours a night".

Combined with much transatlantic to-ing and fro-ing, the end result was that Birchard became run down to the point of illness. Not that he'd change anything, because "you only get one chance like that", and working with West changed Birchard's perspective on his own music. "The only people who know my name at the moment are hardcore music fans," he says. "I want to raise my profile."

Hence his new album, the follow-up to his 2009 debut 'Butter', is "much more song-based, not a collection of random tracks written over the previous year". He adds: "When I was writing the tracks on 'Butter' I was just interested in sounds that I liked. The new album is a lot more emotional. It's also less complex. There's nothing there that isn't needed. Basically, I want people to see me as more than just a beatmaker." ■ CHRIS COTTINGHAM

▶**TITLE** TBC
▶**RELEASE DATE** TBC
▶**LABEL** Warp

St Vincent

After returning from tour in 2012, Annie Clark intended to disconnect from the world of work completely. Instead, she had accidentally finished her fourth record six weeks later. While not as heavy as Record Store Day single 'Krokodil', the result – titled 'St Vincent' – is intensely physical, transforming Clark's zippy fretwork into alloyed grooves inspired by Parliament-Funkadelic and realised by the Dap-Kings' Homer Steinweiss, Midlake's McKenzie Smith and 'Strange Mercy' accomplice Bobby Sparks. "This is definitely a more extroverted, freer record," Clark says. "Guitar-centric rifforama, these moments of total frenzy."

No longer are the female protagonists of her songs trapped in medicated suburban prisons, but laying it bare in an information-overloaded society and seeing what sticks, running naked in the woods and flipping between tentative new love and voracious desire – "*I want all of your mind*", she demands on 'Digital Witness'. The most exciting thing about 'St Vincent' is not knowing what she'll do with your mind when she has it. ■ LAURA SNAPES

▶**TITLE** 'St Vincent'
▶**RELEASE DATE** February 24
▶**LABEL** Caroline

EMILIE BAILEY

50 more albums due in 2014

or so they say

Foo Fighters
Dave Grohl has said that the follow-up to 2011's 'Wasting Light', will "not be a conventional record".

Beck
Beck has described 'Morning Phase', due in February, as being part of a "California tradition".

Gerard Way
The former My Chemical Romance man is set to go solo this year.

Frank Ocean
The soul singer road-tested new tracks 'Anything For You' and 'Feel California' last summer.

Pharrell
The NERD man is poised to capitalise on his chart-topping 2013 with his first solo album in eight years.

Jamie T
Former Tribes man Johnny Lloyd let slip he'd been working with the AWOL Mr T last summer, describing the album as "really slow, angry punk".

Rolo Tomassi
"We're working on film soundtrack sort of sounds at the minute – massive orchestral strings, the whole works," reports James Spence of a new album due in autumn.

Diiv
Zachary Cole Smith says his band's second album will be influenced by his turbulent life since September's arrest on drugs charges. "It's definitely going to be a darker record based on how my life has been since the last record came out."

Julian Casablancas
Synths at the ready: the Strokes frontman's second solo album is due in April. There's a chance of another Strokes LP too – an official newsletter told fans they were looking to "return to the scene" in 2014.

Black Lips
Produced by Patrick Carney (Black Keys), 'Underneath The Rainbow' is due on March 18.

La Roux
She's been in our January round-ups for years on the trot, but that second album is finally due this year.

Elbow
Inspired by frontman Guy Garvey's travels to New York, 'The Take Off And Landing Of Everything' is due on March 3.

Sky Ferreira
With one foot in the indie world and another in the pop world (she joins Miley Cyrus on tour soon), the singer's US debut 'Night Time, My Time' is set for a delayed UK release in February.

Bombay Bicycle Club
North London indie meets world music on 'So Long, See You Tomorrow', due February 3.

Maximo Park
Field Music assist as producers on 'Too Much Information', due February 3.

The Family Rain
Ollie Walter has high hopes for his band's Jim Abiss-produced debut 'Under The Volcano': "There are some insane sounds on there – a spaghetti western trip-hop song, Phil Spector walls of sound. We really wanted to make a bold statement."

Johnny Marr
Tracks on the second album from *NME*'s reigning Godlike Genius, due in the summer, include 'Dynamo', 'Spiral Cities' and 'Reach Out Speak Out'.

Telegram
They might currently only have seven songs in their set, but Telegram guitarist Matt Wood reckons they have big plans for their debut album. "We want to make sure every sonic spectrum is filled up," he says.

Brody Dalle
The former Distillers singer goes solo – with a little help from members of Warpaint and Garbage's Shirley Manson.

The Amazing Snakeheads
The Scots rockers promise March's debut will come in more shades than their live show might suggest. "We've got ballads on there," says drummer Jordan Hutchison. "It's not all your one-and-a-half minute punk rock."

MØ
The experimental Danish performer releases 'No Mythologies to Follow' on February 24.

Jimi Goodwin
The Doves frontman goes solo with 'Odludek', due March 24 and inspired by a desire to "mess shit up".

Coldplay
Just a rumour at the moment, but Chris Martin's crew made a low-key return in December 2013 at the Ring O' Bells pub in Compton Martin, Somerset.

Jack White
White recently revealed that he was "producing two albums this month, and finishing them. One of them is mine."

Plus
Mogwai
Future Islands
SBTRKT
Jessie Ware
Laura Marling
The Black Keys
Ariel Pink
Arthur Beatrice
Friendly Fires
TV On The Radio
Health
Mastodon
The Prodigy
Two Door Cinema Club
Tune-Yards
Azealia Banks
FKA Twigs
Purity Ring
Angel Olsen
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Beach House
Pond
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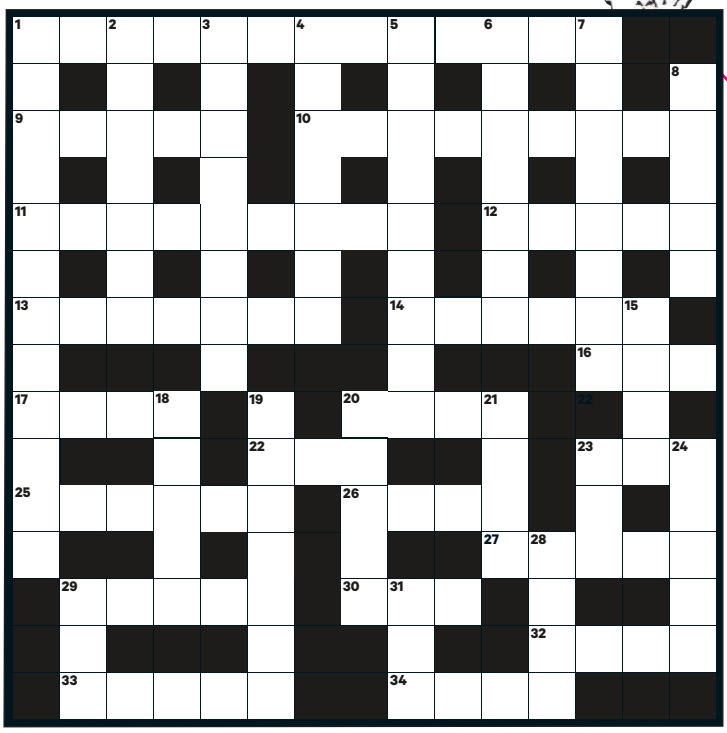


CLUES ACROSS

1 Don't sit down 'cos I've honked on your seat. Actually, just don't drink and drive (3-3-3-4)
9 Strange yodel from Palma Violets' drummer (5)
10 *"All at sea again, and now my hurricanes have brought down this _____ ____ to bathe me again"*, Echo & The Bunnymen (5-4)
11 His albums include 'Rust Never Sleeps' and 'Sleeps With Angels' (4-5)
12 *"Here I go, let them know I'm heading back to _____, all the way to USA"*, Feeder (5)
13 Gossip played a part in this Fleetwood Mac album (7)
14 Blondie couldn't find a way out of recording this album (2-4)
16+24D The Swans reworking of a Metronomy number (3-5)
17+19D Tour van all wrecked going around the east for Crystal Fighters (4-7)
20 (See 3 down)
22+6D Perhaps it's one for a synthpop group of the '80s (3-2-5)
23 *"Taking you as ___ as you go"*, Foo Fighters (3)
25 Big Pink soft smooth material (6)
26 Guitarist with The 1975 taken in by Channel 4 (4)
27 Peter _____, legendary guitarist with Fleetwood Mac in the late '60s (5)
29 *"I'm a _____ baby, so why don't you kill me"*, 1994 (5)
30 Their debut single in 1981 was 'Radio Free Europe' (3)
32 The Rolling Stones didn't gather that he was the drummer for Culture Club (4)
33 On the whole, they amounted to a US R&B girl group (5)
34 (See 8 down)

CLUES DOWN

1 It's a commonplace feeling for U2 (8-4)
2 Pet Shop Boys album puts us in a state of bliss (7)
3+20A *"I want so much to ____ ____ ____/'Cos I need you to look into mine"*, 2007 (4-4-4)
4 US towns upset by Bat For Lashes album (3-4)
5 The Pigeon Detectives noted action was needed due to the immediate danger from this album (9)
6 (See 22 across)
7 It's wrong to follow a play with group that featured Gary Numan in early '80s (8)
8+34A Opened it wildly, finding nothing inside by Sum 41 (2-3-4)
15 The Only Ones started off with a member of Hurts (4)
18 *"I saw the ghost of _____ on Union Avenue"*, from 'Walking In Memphis' (5)
19 (See 17 across)
20+21D Honest Reg! That's a remix album from Turin Brakes (5-4)
23 The sheltered side of Evanescence's singer (3)
24 (See 16 across)
28 Giant Sand album in some poor amplification (4)
29 Californians with 'A Place In The Sun' having started in Littlehampton (3)
31 'The ___ Has No ___', The Strokes (3)

DECEMBER 7 ANSWERS

ACROSS 1 Shangri-La, 6 Album, 9 Matangi, 10 Shuffle, 12 Tupelo, 13 It Mek, 14 She, 15 Irons, 16 Shock, 17+18A Go To Sleep, 20 Mika, 22 Love Spreads, 25 Edge, 26 Eels, 27 Roots, 28 Relf, 29+13D Billy Idol, 30 Errol
DOWN 1 Something Else, 2 Antiphon, 3 Gin Blossoms, 4+8D Is It Me, 5+6D Awesome As Fuck, 7 Belfast Child, 11 Eyes, 19 Elenore, 21+16D Ace Of Spades, 23 Valli, 24 Parry, 25 Earl

Normal NME terms and conditions apply, available at NME.COM/terms. Cut out the crossword and send it, along with your name, address and email, marking the envelope with the issue date, before Tuesday, January 28, 2014, to: Crossword, NME, 9th Floor, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU. Winners will be notified via email.

QUIZ

■ Compiled by ALAN WOODHOUSE (answers on page 67)

1 Kaiser Chiefs are named after a football team from which country?

2 Which '90s *NME* cover stars were fronted by Toni Halliday?

3 Which two Kinks songs mention London mainline railway stations?

4 Kim Deal has been in both Pixies and The Breeders – but what was the name of the other band she fronted in the mid-'90s?

5 In which US city did the Sex Pistols play their last gig in 1978?

6 U2's 1998 chart hit 'Sweetest Thing' originally appeared as a B-side to which single?

7 True or false: Kurt Cobain's middle name was Donald.

8 Which UK record label's first release was Sebadoh's 'Rocking The Forest' EP in 1993?

9 Which British comedian helped raise Lily Allen when he had a relationship with her mum?

10 Which US band's 1986 debut album was called 'Hear It Is'?

11 In 2007, who became the first hip-hop group to be inducted into the US Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame?

12 When Sonic Youth appeared in the 'Homerpalooza' episode of *The Simpsons*, whose watermelon did they steal?

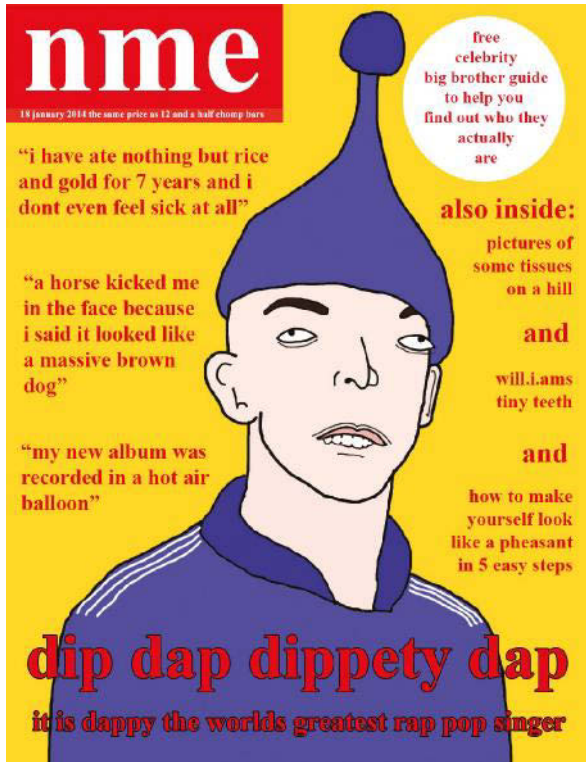
13 Danielle and Este Haim were in an all-girl group in the mid-'00s. What were they called?

14 When Jarvis Cocker appeared with The Strokes at Reading Festival in 2011, they covered a song by which veteran US band?

15 Whose 2003 greatest hits compilation was titled 'In Time'?

THE NME COVER THAT I GONE AND DONE

■ by CHRIS SIMPSONS ARTIST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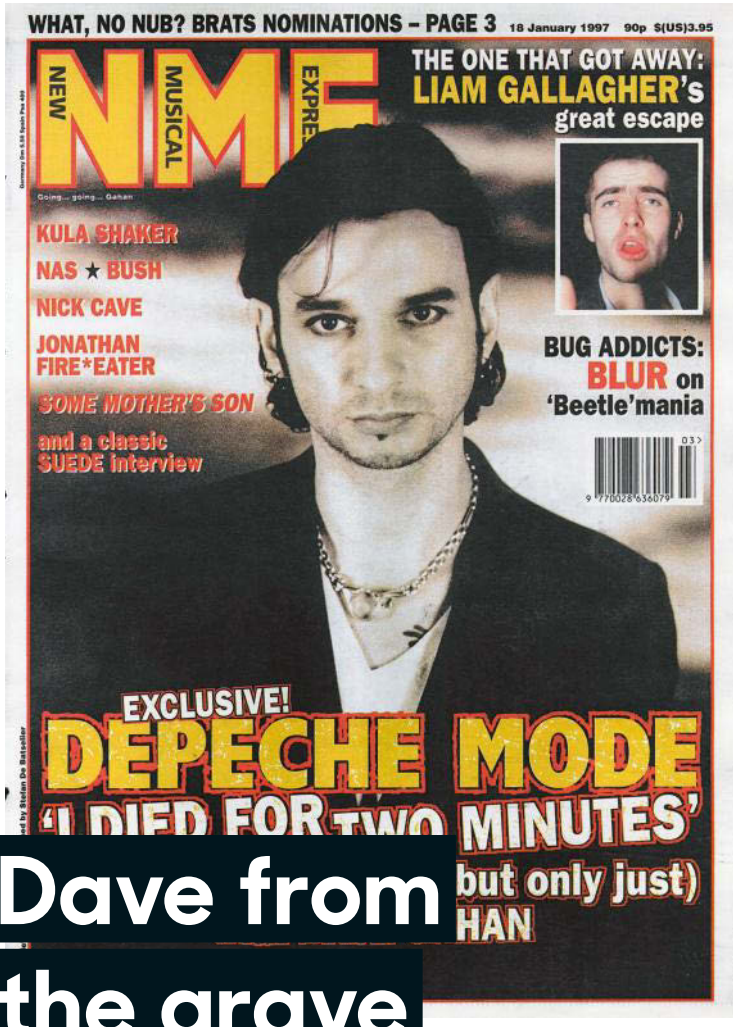
DAVID EDWARDS, ANDY WILLSHER, HENRY HARRIS/FEATUREFLASH

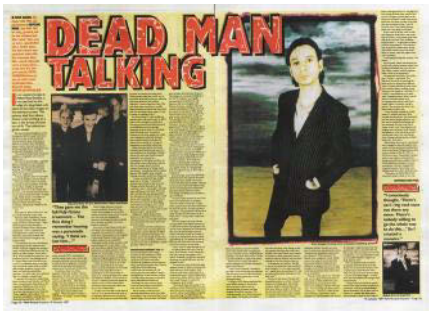
THIS WEEK IN 1997



Dave from the grave

The Depeche Mode frontman on surviving a speedball overdose, and how Kurt Cobain nicked his idea

Despite dying for two minutes from a cocaine and heroin speedball overdose, attempting suicide, having a heart attack and quitting numerous rehabs, Depeche Mode's Dave Gahan has survived to tell *NME*'s Keith Cameron the tale of the hell he went through to make the Mode's latest album 'Ultra'. Now six months clean, Gahan is frank about his wilful descent into addiction and despair, reliving his overdose in gruesome detail. "They gave me the full *Pulp Fiction* treatment and got a heartbeat on the way to the hospital. The first thing I remember hearing was a paramedic saying 'I think we lost him'... It was really black and really scary. I woke up handcuffed to a cop and he was reading me my rights."



His reasoning for becoming this superhuman drug fiend? "I consciously thought, 'There's no fucking rock stars out there any more. There's nobody willing to go the whole way.' So I created a monster. When I got the news that Kurt Cobain had died, my first reaction was that I was angry. I was pissed off. I felt like he'd stolen my idea."

HERBALLY CHALLENGED

After the murder of Tupac, NYC rapper Nas, frazzled from a lack of weed, tells *NME*'s Andy Crysell how he felt the need to "keep working to keep the evil away". He also pines for the world of acting: "Before I started rapping professionally, I was writing screenplays, learning to act. I wanted to be a soap star. I love the way that TV's a fantasy world where the stars get all the attention, where no-one can ignore you like in the real world."

NOT SO BLUR-RY

Ahead of their fifth album 'Blur', the band claim they've cleaned up their act. Graham Coxon has stopped drinking and Dave Rowntree is now "the reliable one". Only "vagueness incarnate" Alex James arrives hungover. Graham expands on the new album's grunge-influenced sound and Blur's attitude to pop culture. Laddism is, he says, comparable to "neo-Nazism", and "CHRIS EVANS IS THE BIGGEST WANKER THAT EVER LIVED. Print that in capitals, please."

REVIEWED THIS WEEK

Daft Punk – 'Homework' 7/10

"As a rule, the better a country's cuisine, the worse its pop music. This is a mighty mash-up of a debut that radically redefines France's pop credentials. And Daft Punk probably make a tasty quiche too." ■ STEPHEN DALTON

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

▶'Stereo' by Pavement is Single Of The Week, as "the only song here that could shove 'Beetlebum' from the limelight".

▶Liam Gallagher has been cautioned for possessing cocaine. Leaving the police station, he reportedly "pretended to snort cocaine from his wrist".

▶Bush's 'Razorblade Suitcase' album is given 1/10 by Johnny Cigarettes, who concludes: "shit suitcase".

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STEFAN DE BATSELLIER

DOES ROCK 'N' ROLL KILL BRAINCELLS? Vs THE FANS

WE FIND THE ROCK STAR, YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS

Kaiser Chiefs fan Lily Allen

Ricky Wilson

Kaiser Chiefs singer

1 What colour dinner jacket are you wearing in the video for 'Every Day I Love You Less And Less'?
Karen Bolton, London, on Twitter
"I'm wearing a burgundy and red striped jacket."
CORRECT
"It was done by Tim Pope, who did all the Cure videos. It was a long day and I was really hungover. I started dating the stylist."

2 Which of your songs was covered by Lily Allen and Mark Ronson in 2007?
Liam Hargreaves, Bristol, via email
"'Oh My God'. It was really good. I remember meeting Lily Allen for the first time after the Ivor Novello awards and no-one had ever heard of her. This guy Mike from Universal Publishing said 'This is Lily Allen, she's gonna be the next big thing, this is her record.' He gave me her demo CD and I got her to sign it, so technically I was the first autograph she did."
CORRECT

3 How many times do you repeat the line *"I predict a riot"*?
Ronnie Turner, Leeds, via email
"24?"
WRONG. 16

4 What number in the charts did your first single 'Oh My God' reach?
Alan King, London, on Facebook
"Number 39."
WRONG. It was 66
"Really? I was guessing."

5 Which song of yours includes the lyric *"You're hanging with a crowd/A load of cheats and liars"*?
Ian 'Drenge' Dawson, Sheffield, via email
"Hang on... (*sings to himself*) 'Born To Be A Dancer'. We don't really play it live but I like it. It was one of the first ones we ever wrote. It's from *Father Ted*, that. There's a line in *Father Ted* where he's at an award ceremony for Priest Of The Year or something and he's going 'and now, moving on to cheats and liars...'"
CORRECT

6 Which TV show host did Nick Hodgson sell his drumkit to?
Imogen Walker, London, via email
"David Letterman. Only the band knew that Nick was leaving and we were on TV in America and the crew were like 'Why is he selling his drumkit?' A few months later we got an email from Nick saying, 'Actually, the band bought that kit, so here's your share of the money'. Whitey replied 'Give it to charity.'"
CORRECT

Ex drummer Nick Hodgson

7 What ad were you controversially banned from screening in 2005 during your tour of America?
Nick Hungerford, Leeds, on Twitter
"What ad? I've no idea."
WRONG. Make Poverty History
"No memories of that at all. I don't know anything about that. I'm surprised, if we were doing a tour of America, that we had screens. The budget's pretty low so we'd usually hold up a piece of cardboard. We might've been on tour with Green Day or Foo Fighters."

8 Which categories did you win at the 2006 Brit Awards?
Ed McGovern, Glasgow, via email
"Two of them don't exist any more. I know these because I just built a library and put my Brit awards up. It was

Brit winners Coldplay

Best Live, Best Rock, Best British Group."
CORRECT. Good night?
"Better than most people. I remember going to Coldplay, who won Best Album, 'That's the one I wanted.' They were, 'Steady on, you won three!' It's funny, you just take it for granted when you're winning loads of them."

9 Name two films Kaiser Chiefs songs have featured in.
Sally Kitson, Birmingham, via email
"*Run Fatboy Run* and there's one about a kid spy. It's his name... *Stormbreaker*?"
CORRECT. *Run Fatboy Run*, *St Trinian's 2: The Legend Of Fritton's Gold*, and *Stormbreaker*
"*St Trinian's 2*! Which I was in! Noel Fielding couldn't do it. I played Sarah Harding's boyfriend."

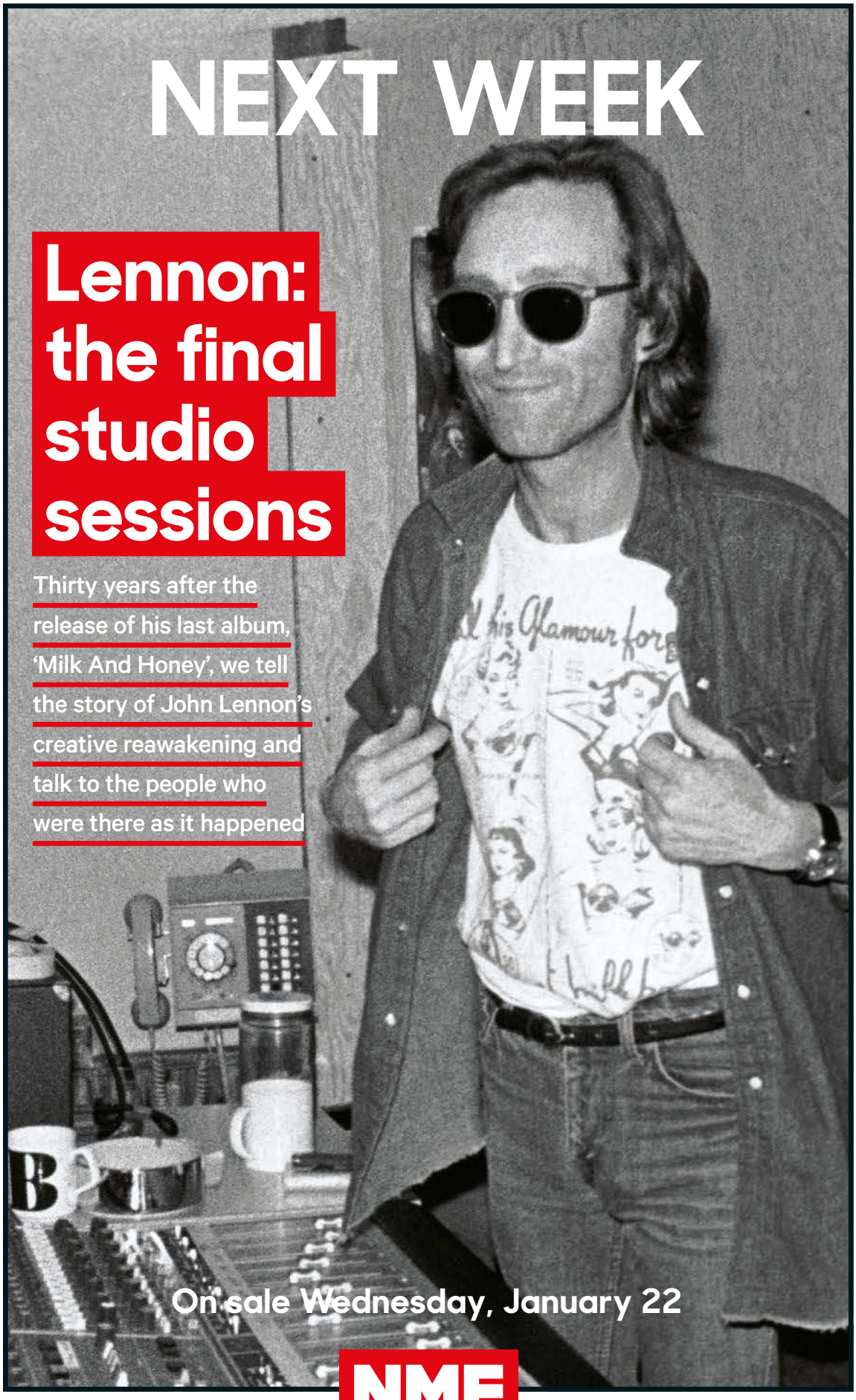
10 Can you remember three members of the panels when you hosted *Never Mind The Buzzcocks*?
Laura Collins, London, via email
"Bez, Ryan Jarman... Phill Jupitus."
CORRECT. You could also have had Bill Bailey, Colin Murray and Jeff Green
"It was funny, I think Bez gave Ryan something he shouldn't have given him and Ryan fell asleep at one point. We had to stop filming and take Ryan to the toilets. I enjoyed it, it was fun."

SCORE = 7

"That's alright. I'm not bothered really."

BBC PICTURES, GETTY

NEXT WEEK



Lennon: the final studio sessions

Thirty years after the release of his last album, 'Milk And Honey', we tell the story of John Lennon's creative reawakening and talk to the people who were there as it happened

BOB GRUEN

On sale Wednesday, January 22

NME

ALSO IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE

INTERVIEWS

- Warpaint
- Alt-J
- Brett Anderson
- Angel Haze
- T Bone Burnett
- Angel Olsen

ALBUM REVIEWS

- Broken Bells
- Cymbals
- Actress
- Dum Dum Girls
- The Gaslight
- Anthem

CAUGHT LIVE

- Action Bronson
- Fat White
- Family
- Joanna
- Gruesome
- Menace Beach
- Against Me!

Quiz answers: 1. South Africa **2.** Curve **3.** 'Waterloo Sunset', 'Victoria' **4.** The Amps **5.** San Francisco **6.** 'Where The Streets Have No Name' **7.** True **8.** Domino **9.** Harry Enfield **10.** The Flaming Lips **11.** Grandmaster Flash And The Furious Five **12.** Peter Frampton's **13.** The Valli Girls **14.** The Cars **15.** REM

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ICE COLD SHOT
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Jägermeister
IT RUNS DEEP